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Kuwaiti, Iraqi leaders hold talks

BAGHDAD (R) — Kuwaiti and Iraqi leaders met Tuesday for talks which focused on peace talks between Baghdad and Tehran, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said. It said Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and the vice-chairman of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council, Izzat Ibrahim, held two meetings. One dealt with "matters of mutual concern" and the other centered on "the U.N.-sponsored negotiations between Iraq and its Gulf war for Iran," INA said. Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati are due to hold separate talks with U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in New York (see page 2). INA said other discussions Tuesday covered events in the Middle East, including Lebanon, Western diplomats in Kuwait told Reuters that Kuwait wanted to resolve a long-standing border issue with Iraq. An Arab diplomat told Reuters Sheikh Sabah's talks in Baghdad were expected to cover relations between the Gulf Cooperation Council, of which Kuwait is a member, and a proposed Arab Cooperation Council grouping Iraq, Egypt, Jordan and North Yemen.

Israeli-Egyptian talks snag

TEL AVIV (R) — Diplomatic snags hit talks between Israel and Egypt to end the seven-year-old Tabu border dispute Tuesday but Israeli officials said there was no crisis. Israel Radio said the Egyptian delegation head left in anger Tuesday because of the way his Israeli counterpart reacted to the Egyptian's arrival 45 minutes late. It did not elaborate. But the Israeli foreign ministry, reporting progress in the talks, said the day had ended with a friendly handshake. The Egyptians had earlier been angered because the Israelis failed to tell them in advance they were planning to leave the tiny Red Sea beach strip to report to the foreign ministry. Israeli spokesman Alan Liel said there might have been a misunderstanding over the timing of the trip and other administrative arrangements. "It is clear to us there is no crisis in the talks and there is even real progress on a series of issues related to access to the Tabu area," he added, declining to go into details about the walkout. A series of disputes between the delegations has delayed Israel's pullout from Tabu which it retained after withdrawing from the rest of Sinai in 1982. International arbitrators ruled last year that Egypt had sovereignty over the 700-metre beach.

Qasem: Arabs ready for peace, Israel should respond

By Alistair Lyon
Reuters

AMMAN — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem said Tuesday the Arabs and Palestinians had demonstrated their readiness for peace and urged Israel to do the same.

"The Arab side has finally come to a coherent position regarding the requirements for peace," Qasem told Reuters in an interview. "For a long time, people could hide behind Arab negativism, but this time the other side (Israel) is exposed."

He said Jordan's disengagement from the occupied West Bank and the Palestine Liberation Organisation's acceptance of U.S. conditions for a U.S.-PLO dialogue had cleared the way for an international peace conference under U.N. auspices.

"The PLO has clearly accepted a political settlement based on (U.N. Security Council Resolutions) 242 and 338 and the right of all in the region to exist in peace and security," he said.

"Is the other side ready to accept 242 and 338 which provided for the return of the territories occupied in 1967 in return for a genuine and comprehensive peace?"

Qasem said Israel had failed to persuade the world that the 14-



Marwan Al Qasem

month-old Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza was a form of terrorism.

He said there was a danger that Israel would try to derail the U.S.-PLO dialogue by blaming

PLO leader Yasser Arafat for actions by groups he might not fully control.

Israel has officially asked Washington to break off the dialogue after an attempt Sunday by fighters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) to infiltrate Israel from Lebanon.

In December, Arafat formally renounced terrorism, but the PLO has reserved the right to carry out military operations against Israel until it withdraws from the West Bank and Gaza.

Qasem said King Hussein was expected to meet U.S. President George Bush during the funeral of the late Japanese Emperor Hirohito in Tokyo this month and would not decide on a possible visit to Washington until after that.

"The important thing is for the U.S. administration to look in depth at the PLO's on-record interest in the peace process within the requirements of peace in the region," Qasem said.

He ruled out any possibility of a separate peace between Jordan and Israel.

"The basic conflict is between Israel and the Palestinians. When (the late Egyptian President Anwar) Sadat got into an experiment of signing a treaty with (Israel) on his own, he did not solve the Palestinian problem."



HM King Hussein

King to attend Hirohito funeral

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein will attend the funeral of late Emperor Hirohito of Japan, the Royal Court announced Tuesday.

The funeral of the emperor, who died Jan. 7, is set for Feb. 24.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem told Reuters in an interview Tuesday that the King would hold talks with U.S. President George Bush during the two leaders' visit to Tokyo to attend the funeral.

According to reports from Washington, Bush will also meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The president's talks with the Arab leaders will cover prospects for peace in the Middle East and the role that the U.S. could play in settling the Arab-Israeli conflict, the reports said.

Jordan-Syria Higher Committee to meet

AMMAN (Petra) — A joint Jordanian-Syrian committee, entrusted with preparing for meetings of the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee, Tuesday started meetings to discuss scopes of cooperation and coordination between the two countries in various fields.

The committee will focus on means of enhancing commercial exchange and increasing its volume to reflect the close economic relations between the two countries.

Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohammad Al Saqqaf, head of the Jordanian delegation to the preparatory committee meetings, said the

committee meetings contribute to laying new corner stones of economic relations.

Saqqaf noted that the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee, which meets Thursday, was one of the first joint Arab committees and that it had become an example that should be emulated.

Saqqaf voiced satisfaction over coordination between Jordan and Syria and called for further constructive cooperation in various fields.

The head of the Syrian side to the preparatory committee meetings, Mohammad Al Sharif, governor of the Central Bank of Syria, stressed that the experi-

ence of the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee had always been and would remain a pioneering experience because it was based on noble national principles.

The Jordanian side to the preparatory committee meetings included Ministry of Transport Secretary General Mahmoud Al Talhouji, Central Bank of Jordan Deputy Governor Maher Shukri, Jordan's Ambassador to Syria Nayef Al Hadid and Ministry of Industry's Director of Economic Cooperation and Export Promotion Assem Hindawi, in addition to other officials from the ministries of industry and trade and transport and the direc-

tor general of the Jordanian Agricultural Marketing and Processing Company.

The Syrian side to the meetings included the deputy transport minister, the director general of Al Qasem company, the director general of the Syrian Construction Company, the director of the Ministry of Industry and External Trade's Economic Affairs Department, the director of planning at the Supply Ministry and the director of the Vegetables and Fruit Company.

The Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee meeting will be co-chaired by Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and his Syrian counterpart Mahmoud Al Zoubi.

U.S. report accuses Israel of increased human rights violations

WASHINGTON (Agencies)

The United States, in its 1988 human rights report, accused Israel Tuesday of a "substantial increase in human rights violations," mostly involving the Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The report, covering 169 countries and prepared by the State Department, is the most detailed analysis of the 14-month-old intifada, which has raised serious concerns among American Jews, as well as U.S. officials.

The report came in testimony before the House of Representatives Appropriations Sub-committee on Foreign Operations, which over-

sees U.S. foreign assistance allocations, including aid to Israel.

"According to the testimony from representatives of Amnesty International, both sides have used violence in the uprising, which began in December 1987, but there have been excesses on the Israeli side."

"Demonstrators have thrown rocks and Molotov cocktails," the Amnesty International report said. "However, the tactics of the Israeli army have exceeded the use of reasonable force."

It said there have been "hundreds of questionable killings" by Israeli forces and that few have been adequately investi-

gated.

The Amnesty International report, and a report by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights — questioned the use of high velocity bullets by the Israeli forces as well as the use of plastic bullets which the two organizations said can be lethal.

The State Department report described a pattern of Israeli behavior in the West Bank and Gaza in which Palestinian freedoms and protections are severely limited and often abused.

The uprising, involving young people "motivated by Palestinian nationalism and a desire to bring the occupation to an end," caught Israeli au-

thorities off guard, the report said.

"The Israeli defense forces, caught by surprise, and untrained and inexperienced in riot control, responded in a manner which led to a substantial increase in human rights violations," it said.

Ching figures compiled by the media, Palestinians and the Israeli government, the report said "500 Palestinians were killed in 1988 as a result of the uprising, most of them by the (Israeli) army, some by Israeli settlers, over 20,000 Palestinians were wounded or injured by the (army)."

The report found that 11 Israelis had been killed in the uprising

LAST-MINUTE NEWS

S. Arabia seeks Egypt's Arab League return

NICOSIA (R) — King Fahd of Saudi Arabia is campaigning actively for Egypt's readmission to the Arab League, a Saudi official said Tuesday. The official, quoted by the Saudi Press Agency, said Saudi Arabia asked at an Arab League summit in Algiers in June 1987 for Egypt's return. "King Fahd announced his request at the summit. (He) has exerted and will continue to exert efforts to achieve his request," the official said.

Pakistan mediating Saudi-Iranian rift

NICOSIA (R) — Iran hopes for early restoration of diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia through Pakistani mediation, a leading parliamentarian said Tuesday. Saudi Arabia broke diplomatic relations with Iran last April, accusing Tehran of hostility following riots in Mecca during the annual pilgrimage in July 1987. In an interview with the Iranian news agency IRNA, Sadeq Khalkhali, head of Iran's parliamentary foreign relations committee, praised Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan for efforts to resolve the row between Tehran and Riyadh. He said he hoped the initiative would succeed and Iran and Saudi Arabia would issue a joint statement.

Senator says White House report clears Tower

WASHINGTON (R) — The Senior Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee said Tuesday a White House report on John Tower contained no basis to disqualify him as President Bush's nominee for defense secretary. Senator John Warner told reporters that "the evidence... does not provide the basis for any disqualification." The Federal Bureau of Investigation since last Thursday had investigated new allegations involving Tower's personal life, and as a result his Senate confirmation was delayed.

France calls for Lebanese election

BEIRUT (AP) — French emissary Jean-Francois Deniau said Tuesday his government supports early presidential elections to end a political crisis that threatens to cement the partition of Lebanon into sectarian cantons. "We support the election of a president soon," Deniau told reporters after meetings with Lebanese leaders in west Beirut. "Arab efforts that we support fall within this framework," he added, referring to a six-member Arab League committee formed last month and charged with mediating a Lebanese settlement. The French emissary, who has been in Beirut since Friday, met Tuesday with acting Prime Minister Salim Al Hoss and Nabih Berri, who leads the mainstream Shi'ite Amal militia and holds the justice portfolio in Hoss' government. He had met in east Beirut with army commander Michel Aoun, who heads the military cabinet in Lebanon's dual government.

Disarmament conference opens session

GENEVA (AP) — The Geneva conference on disarmament opened its 1989 session Tuesday with a message from U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar urging faster work on a global ban on chemical weapons. In his message, Perez de Cuellar noted that last month's special Paris conference on chemical weapons, attended by 149 countries, reflected the world community's consensus to conclude a ban at the earliest date. "I very much hope that that this commitment, undertaken at such a high political level, will accelerate the pace of your negotiations," said the message read at the opening meeting.

S. African detainees vow fast to death

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Scores of South African political detainees held without trial in Johannesburg jails announced Tuesday that they would starve themselves to death unless the government let them go. Twenty anti-apartheid detainees in Johannesburg are already in the third week of a fast and approaching a critical stage while 53 stopped taking food a week ago. In an open letter to the government released Tuesday 118 black detainees said they would join the hunger strike. "We are fully aware that various diseases, complications, blindness and even death might result from such a hunger strike. However we cherish our freedom more deeply," the strikers said in their letter to Law and Order Minister Adrian Vlok.



An Afghan soldier stands guard in downtown Kabul as a pedestrian walks past. Right: members of the Afghan women's militia attend a rally in the Afghan capital

Moscow reaffirms strong support for Najibullah

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Senior Soviet officials Tuesday reaffirmed Moscow's backing for Afghan President Najibullah and said his administration was strong enough to repel any attempt by guerrillas to overthrow it.

The officials, including Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Rogachev, were speaking at a news conference one week before the last Soviet troops are due to leave Afghanistan and as fierce fighting was reported across the country.

"There have been no nuances or changes with regard to President Najibullah from the Soviet side," said Rogachev, just back after accompanying Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to talks with Pakistani leaders on the Afghan question.

"All the positions we set out in Islamabad were clearly coordinated in advance with him," Rogachev said.

Yury Alexeyev, chief of the Foreign Ministry's Middle East Department, said the Afghan government "has sufficient forces" to handle any onslaught by the guerrillas, whose own strength was undermined.

"The government controls, and this is decisive, all the big towns and cities — Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad and others where a large part of the Afghan

population lives," Alexeyev told the news conference.

Rogachev said the Najibullah administration, with which the guerrillas refuse to negotiate arguing it is communist, would continue to strive for national reconciliation and the formation of a coalition government.

"But at the same time they have the means to deal a military rebuff," he said.

Rebels attacked the airport in Afghanistan's second city and Afghan planes pounded guerrilla positions in the south as the Soviet troop withdrawal moved into its final stage. TASS news agency reported earlier Tuesday.

"Dozens of mines and rockets hit Kandahar airport," TASS said, quoting the official Afghan news agency Bakhtar. "Eleven oppositionists were killed and five wounded in the area of the airport."

It gave no details of damage from the attack which it said occurred during "the past 24 hours."

"Afghan aircraft pounded insurgents' positions in the Anjil district of Herat province (in the south of Afghanistan)," TASS added. "Four extremists were killed and several heavily wounded."

The clashes were reported as Western diplomatic sources in Islamabad said the last Soviet warplanes based at Kabul airport flew home Monday.

The sources said Soviet warplanes had also left their other two Afghan bases and this probably meant the Soviet air force in Afghanistan had gone home. There was no immediate confirmation from Moscow.

TASS said about 30,000 servicemen had gone during the last few weeks, apparently leaving 20,000 or so to withdraw by Feb. 15, the deadline set in last April's U.N.-mediated Geneva accords.

During Tuesday's news conference in Moscow, Alexeyev and Rogachev were asked several times whether the Soviet air force would continue to support Afghan government forces by bombing guerrilla bases after all of Moscow's forces had left the country.

"I do not know how that question arises. There is no reason for it," Alexeyev said. "Perhaps you are thinking of food drops?" Rogachev asked one questioner.

"We will strictly observe our obligations under the Geneva accords," Alexeyev declared. "That is a clear answer to the question."

Violent protests continue in occupied territories

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot and wounded five Palestinians during violent clashes with stone-throwing protesters in Rafah and Khan Younis refugee camps in the occupied Gaza Strip, Palestinians said.

Hospital officials said the wounded included a 15-year-old girl in critical condition from a bullet wound in the head.

The Israeli army imposed curfews on Khan Younis, Jabalya and Sha'ti refugee camps and Beit Lahya village. In Gaza city soldiers arrested six boys aged six to 15 for throwing stones, residents said.

Palestinians said prisoners in a Gaza detention camp staged hunger strike Monday night over poor treatment, and soldiers fired tear-gas to control them.

Israel's Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin says 360 Palestinians have been killed, more than 7,000 wounded and 22,000 arrested during the 14-month-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, the Itim news agency reported.

Rabin said 30 victims were killed by other Arabs. Palestinians killed by other Arabs during the revolt have been suspected of collaborating with the Israeli occupation authorities.

Figures compiled by Reuters for the revolt put the Arab death toll at 383. Itim quoted Rabin as saying Monday that charges were brought against 4,000 of the detained Palestinians. At present 5,000 were held in Israeli prisons.

Rabin said 60 per cent of the stone-throwing protesters in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were children between the ages of six and 14.

More than 80,000 soldiers and reservists have served in the occupied territories to battle the uprising, he was quoted as saying.

Speaking in the southern town of Beersheba, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir cited a poll which he said found that 77 per cent of Israelis opposed the establishment of a Palestinian state in the occupied territories. Shamir said Sunday Israel would never allow a Palestinian state in the occupied territories which he claimed the "land of Israel."

Opinion poll

The opinion poll, published Tuesday, three in four Israelis

oppose the formation of a Palestinian state, and four in five say such a state would threaten Israel's "security."

The results indicated a slight thaw in Israeli attitudes. A similar survey conducted 10 years ago found that 90 per cent opposed the formation of a Palestinian state and believed it would threaten Israel.

The current survey, conducted by the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research, asked a sample of 1,192 Israeli Jews if they would "accept or oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state."

Seventy-seven per cent said they would oppose a separate Palestinian state, and 23 per cent said they would accept, the poll showed.

In a second question, the insti-

tute asked: "Do you believe a Palestinian state on the West Bank would threaten or not threaten the security of the state of Israel?"

About 80 per cent said such a state would be threatening. "It's still a very high number, but there is a certain thawing which is very slow, but in a dovish direction," said Elhanan Katz, director of the private institute.

The survey was taken in January and involved Jews 20 years and older, Katz said. It was the latest in a series begun in 1967. Katz said.

He said the institute does not officially quote a margin of error for its surveys but estimated it to be a range of three per cent to five per cent.

PLO official dismisses Israeli hit at dialogue

CAIRO (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official Tuesday dismissed Israeli attempts to convince the United States to halt its dialogue with the organisation and said the world no longer views the PLO as a terrorist organisation.

Salah Khalaf, a member of Fateh's Central Committee, spoke to reporters shortly after he arrived at Cairo international airport for two days of talks with Egyptian officials.

Khalaf said his talks in Cairo were part of continued consultations on the Palestinian issue and Arab developments between the PLO and Egypt.

Asked about a campaign by Israeli leaders to convince the United States to stop its talks with the PLO, Khalaf said: "The world now no longer considers the PLO a terrorist organisation, and the Israeli position is not new on the international field. Israel is against any dialogue with the PLO."

The U.S.-PLO dialogue was launched in December after a 13-year hiatus, following PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's formal declaration that he recognised Israel and renounced terrorism. Western diplomats and Israeli analysts said Tuesday they doubted the United States would break off talks with the PLO because of a bid to infiltrate Israel by Palestinian fighters.

Oded Eran, number two at Israel's embassy in Washington, told U.S. Deputy Assistant

Secretary of State Ned Walker that an attempt by commandos to attack Israel at the weekend violated the PLO's renunciation of terrorism, Israeli officials said.

Israel had demanded that the U.S. should halt its dialogue with PLO.

Troops killed the five commandos in Israel's self-declared South Lebanon "security zone" and the foreign ministry said it would give the U.S. State Department documents found on the bodies.

"What are the Israelis doing in South Lebanon?" asked PLO spokesman Ahmad Abdul Rahman, reached by telephone at PLO headquarters in Tunis.

"Is that aggression or not. We have been facing this Israeli aggression since 1982. We have the right to self-defence. We have the right to defend our people and our camps."

In Washington, State Department spokesman Charles E. Redman said the United States was looking into the Israeli allegations that the encounter Saturday constituted a violation of the PLO pledge.

"I don't think the Americans will listen to them (the Israelis)," the PLO spokesman said. "I think our people have the right to defend themselves. Every day there is an Israeli raid and shelling in South Lebanon. What can we say to the Americans about that? What can we ask? That the Americans sever relations with Israel as an example?"



Iranian soldiers sit in the rubble of a building in the devastated Iranian port city of Khorranshahr, the scene of some of the most bitter fighting in the eight-year Gulf war.

Iranian cleric sees gap between dream, reality

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's revolution has failed to live up to the promises it made 10 years ago and is beset by corruption and disunity, according to a senior cleric.

Iran's designated future leader, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, said in remarks published Monday, selfishness, intolerance, factional interests and lack of professionalism had hurt the revolution launched in 1979.

"Of course the brave and young revolutionaries are justified in seeing that there is a big gap between what they have gained and what they were promised..."

"If one sees impurity, dishonesty or incompetence he should not be disappointed," said Montazeri, quoted by the Iranian news agency IRNA.

His criticism, among the harshest from within the Iranian leadership, coincides with celebrations marking the 10th anniversary of the Iranian revolution.

"We must not rule at any cost," said Montazeri, adding that state power was just a means to realise justice, equality and other human values.

Montazeri, who was chosen by an assembly of senior clerics in 1985 to succeed Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as Iran's supreme leader, said domestic problems could become insoluble unless they were tackled in time.

The solution was to return to the Islamic unity which existed before the revolution triumphed and prevent any one group from monopolising power, he said.

Senior officials in Tehran pay lip service to Montazeri's critical remarks on various government policies, but the ayatollah often says he is not involved in policy making.

Iran slams France for breaking agreement

TEHRAN (R) — Iran accused France of breaking a gentleman's agreement to free a convicted killer in return for the release of French hostages in Lebanon.

Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati made clear at the end of a fence-mending visit by his French counterpart Roland Dumas that the continued incarceration of guerrilla Anis Naccache was an obstacle to better relations.

Naccache, a pro-Iranian Lebanese, was sentenced to life imprisonment by a French court in 1982. He was convicted for the murder of a policeman and a bystander during a failed attempt to assassinate exiled Iranian politician Shapur Bakhtiari in 1980.

Velayati told reporters Monday that France's former right-wing government led by ex-Prime Minister Jacques Chirac had promised to give Naccache an amnesty in return for Iranian help in freeing three Frenchmen held in Lebanon.

The three finally returned home in May 1988 just before Chirac lost presidential elections to Francois Mitterrand, the socialist candidate.

After his defeat "Mr. Chirac himself made a telephone call to our prime minister and promised him that everything would be fulfilled," Velayati said.

"We can see that between Iran and France there is a gentleman's agreement to do something together."



Ali Akbar Velayati

"Iran fulfilled what it has promised. But unfortunately... the former government did not do the things they promised us. That is the reality," Velayati said.

His remarks, at the end of the first visit by a French minister since the 1979 revolution, appeared likely to complicate the normalisation of relations which both sides say they want.

Dumas at first declined comment on the Naccache case, saying it was "a matter of specific interest to France." But he told reporters on his flight to Kuwait that other senior Iranian leaders had made the same claim as Velayati about a broken agreement.

There was considerable speculation when the three hostages were freed by their pro-Iranian captors that a deal had been struck. But the French interior minister at the time, Charles Pasqua, denied last weekend there had been any accord.

U.N. revives Gulf peace drive; prospect for direct talks cloudy

NICOSIA (R) — The United Nations opens new talks with Iraq and Iran Wednesday, with neither side willing to look the other in the eye but both holding tight to the ceasefire that brought peace to the Gulf last August.

More than five months after the guns fell silent on the battlefronts the ceasefire remains the only element implemented of U.N. Resolution 598 which halted the Gulf war.

Other major issues including the exchange of prisoners of war (PoWs) and the withdrawal of frontline forces to internationally recognised borders have been clouded by waves of rhetoric from both sides.

Iraq's Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati are due to meet U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in New York, but the prospect for face-to-face talks the U.N. hopes will follow is still cloudy.

"They are coming to meet with the secretary general... the format for the discussions is being worked on," U.N. spokesman

Francois Giuliani said.

Since the last round of talks between the belligerents Nov. 11, both sides have made minor concessions.

Iraq last month unilaterally released 250 sick or elderly PoWs and recently reopened Iraqi air space to Iran-bound civilian aircraft.

Tehran and Baghdad have both agreed to join a military working group under the auspices of the commander of the Iran-Iraq U.N. Military Observer Group (UNIMOG) General Slavko Jovic.

Jovic, whose force of 409 observers backed by about 1,000 support staff was set up Aug. 9, said the working group would help consolidate the ceasefire.

"The truce ended nearly eight years of fighting and Jovic said his men were still successfully holding

the ceasefire lines with the help of Iran and Iraq.

But Tehran and Baghdad appear as far apart as the negotiating table as they were when the first round of peace talks began a week after the fighting officially stopped.

Face-to-face talks last year ended in deadlock with both sides now only talking through third parties.

Iraq still demands priority should be given to dredging and clearing the disputed Shatt al Arab waterway which links its main port of Basra to the Gulf and forms the southern frontier between the two countries.

The narrow channel is blocked by a combination of mines, rusted ships' hulks and salt, effectively blocking Basra's artery to the sea.

Aziz told the Iraqi News Agency (INA) Jan. 28 that Iran's refusal to agree to the dredging was "clear-cut evidence of its ill-intentions."

Iran insists that Iraq should withdraw its troops from 2,000 square kilometres of Iranian territory they still occupy.

Velayati was quoted by Tehran radio Feb. 6 as saying: "Direct dialogue for the full implementation of the Resolution (598) will begin soon, but it will lead nowhere if Iraq is stubborn and doesn't withdraw."

U.N. efforts to move the two sides closer by exchanging some of the 100,000 PoWs held in camps throughout Iran and Iraq backfired last year with each accusing the other of breaching the agreement by holding back prisoners.

Diplomats in Baghdad last week said direct talks between Iraq and Iran might resume Feb. 15.

A U.N. spokesman said that after being briefed by his special envoy Jan Eliasson, who visited both Baghdad and Tehran late in January, Perez de Cuellar said he was confident the peace drive would continue.

The secretary-general is confident that the exchanges which took place during the past week and the indications received from both sides can add momentum to the peace process," the spokesman said.

500,000 Sudanese need food

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — A United Nations agency said that more than half a million people will need emergency food relief in southern Sudan this year as deliveries lag behind schedule.

The Rome-based World Food Programme (WFP) said Monday it was facing "tremendous logistical problems in moving desperately needed relief food to the southern provinces" of the war-torn country due to the lack of proper equipment and bad roads.

WFP, the food aid arm of the U.N., said its first overland shipment of food in more than four months recently arrived in the town of Kaya near the Ugandan border. It consisted of 200 metric tons of maize aboard 16 trucks.

WFP suspended surface shipments late last year after a September attack on a truck convoy by Sudanese rebels in which 11 drivers were killed.

The agency said it was organising a second truck convoy to carry an additional 400 tons of maize to Kaya, but noted that the limited capacity of a ferry used along the highway route through northern Uganda had slowed the first shipment.

In a telex to news organisations in Nairobi from its headquarters in Italy, WFP said more than 150,000 refugees had flocked to camps in Juba, about 120 kilometres north of Kaya. It said



they needed 2,000 tons of food monthly, but that an even greater amount had to be delivered and stockpiled before roads were made impassable by the start of the rainy season in late April or early May.

"If overland transport proves insufficient to fulfill needs, WFP may consider initiating a new airlift to Juba," the agency's statement said. WFP ended an airlift to the provincial capital in December after delivering 3,700 tons of food, but several other organisations, including the European Economic Community and the International Committee of the Red Cross, are continuing the flights.

WFP said little or no food had been delivered to more than 200,000 refugees in Bahr al Ghazal and upper Nile provinces, both far north of the Ugandan and Kenyan borders.

Morocco possible NATO training site

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) are interested in the possible use of Morocco for military aircraft training, which has become a major controversy in parts of Western Europe, according to U.S. defence officials.

"The talks (with Morocco) are not new. Interest has increased in Europe for other training sites. But when you're negotiating, the best thing to do is keep your mouth shut," one of the officials told Reuters Monday.

The Moroccan embassy in Washington had no immediate comment on a report in Monday's Washington Times that the United States and NATO might reach a multilateral deal with King Hassan II for training in the Maghreb state.

But the U.S. defence officials, who asked not to be identified, said pressure was mounting to find a training site close to heavily populated Western Europe. Low-level exercises and a high number of plane crashes there have sparked strong protests, especially in West Germany.

"Morocco is not the only site being looked at," one defence official said. He declined to be more specific.

Morocco last year offered to

host the U.S. 401st Tactical Fighter Wing when Spanish officials ordered the F-16 fighter jets to leave their base near Madrid. The aircraft were later accepted by Italy.

Defence officials refused to say whether they expected a deal with Morocco, where the Times reported old U.S. bases at Sidi Slimane north of Rabat and at Kenitra were usable.

"But as we have emphasised before, it is better to train in Europe for fighting in Europe. We understand the problem, however, and see the necessity for training elsewhere if that's necessary," one official said.

Although the terrain of Morocco's desert does not resemble that of Western Europe, the country is strategically located near Gibraltar and has taken part in exercises with U.S. forces.

The Times reported Monday that officials at NATO headquarters in Brussels and in Bonn said the search for aircraft training sites outside Europe was reaching a critical juncture.

Published reports have said the morale of West German air force pilots has plunged and some pilots were quitting, partly because of public concern about low flying and cutbacks in training over Germany due to crashes.

Kuwait buys British helicopters

KUWAIT (AP) — Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah Tuesday signed a contract with a British firm for the delivery of an unspecified number of training helicopters to the Kuwaiti air force, a Defence Ministry statement said. The statement did not provide the number of helicopters involved, or the value of the contract. It said the agreement was signed with a representative of the British company Shorts.

Israelis serve notice on Nazareth weekly

IN THEIR latest move to muzzle the press, the Israeli authorities have served notice on the Nazareth-based weekly Al Raia that it will shortly be closed down. The paper was warned by Amran Kalaji, Israel's district commissioner of the northern region, that it would be shut within one month.

Al Raia (Flag), which started publishing in September 1987, is edited by Raja Ighbaria, a leading member of the Abna al Balad (Sons of the Village) movement, which supports Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians living within Israel, refuses to take part in elections to the Israeli parliament and calls for the eventual

establishment of a secular democratic state for Jews and Arabs in the whole of Palestine.

Abna al Balad is an entirely legal movement but it has nevertheless been the target for victimisation by the Israeli authorities. Of the seven Palestinian citizens of Israel placed in "administrative detention" since the start of the 14-month-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, five have been members of Abna al Balad. Ighbaria himself was arrested in December 1987 and spent three months in prison without charge or trial.

The closure of Al Raia is the latest in a series of moves against the press within Israel. In August 1987 the Nazareth-based publication Al Jamaheer was ordered to

close. In February last year a closure order was served on the Hebrew and Arabic sister papers Derekh Hanitzotz and Tario Al Sharara, and four of the Jewish Israeli editors of the papers are currently being tried on charges of supporting a "terrorist" organisation. In March last year the mass circulation Arabic daily Al Itihad was closed down for one week on the orders of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

The Israeli authorities claim that they are moving against Al Raia because of "intelligence information" that the publication receives financial support from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). A statement by the weekly's editorial board, however, strongly rejects

this claim, insisting that the paper is entirely financed by readers' subscriptions, shop sales, advertisements and donations from members and supporters of Abna al Balad.

The closure warning was an "anti-democratic move" and "one more instance of the policy of silencing dissent," said the Al Raia board. "It is an assault on all who speak out against the crimes of the occupation" and "the resort to 'secret evidence' is nothing more than a convenient smokescreen behind which to launch anti-democratic attacks on anything which the authorities perceive to be a threat." — The Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Belgium to send envoy to Mideast

BRUSSELS (R) — Belgium plans to send an envoy to the Middle East in a bid to help free six Belgian hostages believed to be held in Lebanon, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Tuesday. He declined to say when the envoy would leave and which countries he would visit. Jan Cools, a relief worker with the Norwegian aid organisation Norwac, disappeared from a Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon in May. A previously unknown radical group, the Soldiers of Truth, has said it seized him. Five members of a family called Houtekens were seized from a cruise ship off the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip in November 1987 and are believed to be held by the Palestinian Fateh Revolutionary Council (FRC) of Abu Nidal.

Lebanese involved in Swiss scandal

LUGANO, Switzerland (AP) — Swiss authorities, investigating the country's biggest drug money scandal, say that two Lebanese brothers transferred more than two million Swiss francs (\$1.2 billion) into Switzerland during the four years until their arrest last July. A statement issued by the Ticino state prosecutor Monday said brothers Jean and Barkev Magharian must have been aware that at least some of the money was of criminal origin. Prosecutor Dick Marty said in one case \$36 million, believed to be proceeds from cocaine sales, were brought by couriers from Los Angeles in suitcases. He said the Magharians told interrogators that they assumed the funds were legally obtained and that they had doubts about their origin only after a friend who had organised the transfers was arrested in Los Angeles in November 1986. Marty said the friend, who was not named in the statement, was subsequently paroled and resumed the transfer of the funds. Money deposited with Swiss banks included regularly counterfeited banknotes, Marty said. But, he said, they were merely invalidated and returned to the depositor although banks are under instruction to notify police in such cases.

Iran launches own hovercraft

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran has launched its first domestic-built hovercraft named "Yunus" after the Hebrew prophet Jonah who was swallowed by a whale, according to the official Islamic news agency. The agency, monitored in Nicosia, said Monday the 8.4-metre long and 4.4-metre craft was designed and produced by the "self-sufficiency industry of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards." It said the hovercraft, launched on Lake Maharl in the southern Fars province, can carry 12 people, transport loads up to one tonne and reach a top speed of 60 kilometres per hour. The agency quoted a Revolutionary Guards spokesman as saying a similar hovercraft manufactured elsewhere would cost around \$250,000, but noted that he gave no details of production costs. Iran developed industrial "self-sufficiency" programmes during the eight-year war with Iraq to counter difficulties in obtaining spare parts and high prices on the international arms market.

Activists damage Iranian embassy

THE HAGUE (R) — Police said 15 political activists attacked the Iranian embassy in the Hague Tuesday, smashing windows, hurling eggs and painting political graffiti. Police arrested a Dutchman and two Iranians believed to be involved. The activists daubed slogans saying "Down with the Iranian republic" and "Free political prisoners." Police cordoned off the white building, its front spattered with blood-red paint, and embassy employees could be seen inside cleaning up shattered glass. Police said the Taiwan trade office next door was also damaged, apparently because the activists believed it was part of the embassy. The attack came amid reports from the human rights organisation Amnesty International that more than 1,000 political prisoners have been executed in Iran in the past six months.

Israeli skirts airport security

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli teenager avoided airport security booths at Ben-Gurion international airport and boarded a jet bound for Paris before being caught without a ticket, according to an airport spokesman. The security breach occurred Sunday morning as former intelligence agents and airline officials from around the world gathered outside Tel Aviv for an Israeli-sponsored conference on aviation security. Airport authority spokesman Menachem Eyal said the 16-year-old boy who walked into the airport and onto the plane did not carry a weapon and did not seem to mean harm but was "apparently changed." Eyal said the youth was caught by stewards when he failed to produce a ticket or boarding pass after boarding the Boeing 707. Eyal said the aircraft belonged to the Israeli Arkia Company. The boy was turned over to police, Eyal added. "We are still investigating what happened. It is clear that something very wrong happened, an apparent security breach. We will take the necessary steps against whoever is found guilty," Eyal said.

Bonn helps Cyprus in drug fight

NICOSIA (AP) — West Germany has given high-tech equipment and three vehicles to Cyprus' anti-narcotics squad, according to the official Cyprus News Agency (CNA). The agency said that West German Ambassador to Cyprus Thilo Roetger delivered the equipment Monday to Interior Minister Christodoulos Veniamin at a ceremony held at police headquarters in Nicosia. Roetger said the contribution was part of cooperation efforts by West Germany and Cyprus aimed at combating drug trafficking. CNA said, Cyprus is used by drug smugglers as a transit point due to its geographical location and good communications. Cyprus police and customs officials frequently arrest drug smugglers arriving either by sea or air from nearby Lebanon and other Middle Eastern points.

Activists want Pollards freed

TEL AVIV (AP) — Former Soviet political prisoners have appealed to U.S. President George Bush to pardon Jonathan Pollard and his wife, who were convicted in a spy case involving Israel. "Please grant them their freedom and, should they wish to come to Israel, we will gratefully receive them into our community," said their petition. The appeal was presented to the U.S. consulate in West Jerusalem at a rally that drew around 50 people. They held a sign with portraits of Pollard and his wife, Anne Henderson-Pollard. Pollard, arrested in November 1985, is serving a life sentence for selling top-secret military documents to Israel. His wife was sentenced in March 1987 to five years in prison for conspiracy to receive embezzled government property.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children's programme
17:15 Programme on plants
17:35 Out of Jordan
18:00 News summary in Arabic
18:05 Cairo News Message
18:15 Local programme
18:30 Arabic series
19:00 News in Arabic
19:30 Common mistakes
19:40 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:30 Programme review
21:40 Wrestling
22:30 Varieties programme
23:00 News summary in Arabic
23:10 Programme (cont.)

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Champs Elysees
19:00 News in French
19:15 Aujourd'hui en Jordanie
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Don't wait up
21:30 Panorama
22:00 News in English
22:30 Desperado

PRAYER TIMES

05:03 Fajr
06:22 (Sunrise) Duha
11:51 Dhuhr
14:50 Asr

CHURCHES

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622300.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625443.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811258.
Rainbow Congregation Tel. 822405.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 821264.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Clouds will appear at different altitudes. Winds will be southeasterly changing into southwesterly moderate. In Agba winds will be northwesterly and seas calm.

DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./max. temp.	
Amman	3 / 14
Agaba	9 / 23
Deserts	-2 / 16
Jordan Valley	8 / 21

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Agaba 19. Humidity readings: Amman 20 per cent, Agaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyem	620115
Dr. Anwar Mousa Al Haj	771020
Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim Khalil	896294
Dr. Hisham Kana'an	790286
Fires pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Nairokh pharmacy	626672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shamsi pharmacy	637660

IRBID:

Dr. Isam Hussein Saleh	(—)
Al Bashra' pharmacy	(985238)

ZARQA:

Dr. Tarq Hijawi	(—)
Khalifeh pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	621111, 6377
Fire Brigade	62309093
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	65639091
Public Security Department	656000 / 685111
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	
(directory assistance)	12
Overseas Calls	17
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623010
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661011
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615

Electric Power

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53300
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53300

MARKET PRICES

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in lbs per kg.

Apple	300 / 430
Banana	350 / 300
Banana (Mukannar)	300 / 250
Beans	650 / 550
Broad beans	800 / 700
Cabbage	170 / 140
Carrots	230 / 200
Cauliflower	220 / 160
Cucumbers	630 / 550
Dates	600 / 500
Eggplant	220 / 180
Garlic	230 / 200
Grapefruit	230 / 180
Lemon	260 / 200
Lettuce (per one)	150 / 100
Marrow (large)	380 / 300
Marrow (small)	520 / 440
Orange (Shammouti)	420 / 360
Potato	270 / 220
Onion (dry)	320 / 160
Onion (green)	270 / 220
Pepper (hot)	750 / 650
Pepper (sweet)	600 / 500
Potato	250 / 200
Spinach	150 / 100
Tomato	240 / 180
Tomatoes	210 / 140

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

SYRIAN PREMIER CABLES RIFAI: Prime Minister Zaid Rifai Tuesday received a cable of good wishes from his Syrian counterpart Mahmoud Al Zu'bi, who was flying over the Jordanian airspace, en route to Syria at the end of an official visit to Yemen Arab Republic. (Petra)

CABINET PASSES NEW LAW: Prime Minister Zaid Rifai Tuesday chaired a cabinet meeting during which it endorsed an amendment to the residence and foreign affairs law, whereby violators will have to pay a fine JD 30 for every month they stay beyond the residence permits duration. (Petra)

HAI HASSAN VISITS CENTRAL POST OFFICE: Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khalid Al Hai Hassan Tuesday inspected progress of work at the Amman Central Post Office, and toured the various sections, including the express, registered and surface mail. Hai Hassan was also briefed on the recent measures adopted to improve delivery of postal services. (Petra)

ANANI BRIEFS W. GERMAN TEAM: President of the Royal Scientific Corporation Jawad Anani Tuesday briefed a visiting delegation from the German Economic Cooperation Ministry on the society's projects and activities. Anani and the delegation discussed means of enhancing cooperation in the fields of training, and the use of computers for industrial purposes. The delegation members also watched a documentary on the society's activities. (Petra)

ART EXHIBITION: Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali, chairman of the Royal Society for Fine Arts Tuesday inaugurated the plastic art exhibition of the Lebanese artists Paul and Emanuel Giragossian, at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation's Cultural and Scientific Centre. The exhibition, which runs for three weeks, include 50 artistic plates, depicting various aspects of humanitarian issues. (Petra)

CIVIL AVIATION CLUB: Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Mahmud Jamal Balqaz Tuesday presided over a meeting for the Civil Aviation Club's administrative committee during which he reviewed the club's activities. Balqaz, who is also chairman of the club, called on all civil aviation personnel to join the club and to participate in its various activities. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Royal Jordanian, Arab and Foreign civil aviation companies, and the air transport offices in Jordan. (Petra)

LIGHTING MA'AN ENTRANCES: Ma'an Governorate, in cooperation with the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), Tuesday embarked on lighting the city's entrances at a cost of JD 17,000. (Petra)

NEW MOSQUE IN BALQA: Balqa Governor Mujhim Al Khreisha Tuesday inaugurated Um Nijasa Mosque in Baqaa area, which was built by the Awqaf Department at a cost of JD 18,000. Balqa Awqaf Department last year constructed five mosques at a cost of JD 111,500. (Petra)

SUPPLY LAW VIOLATOR FINED: The military governor has endorsed the military court's verdict sentencing Sa'adi Abdullah Hassan Omar to payment of JD 60 fine, or 120 days imprisonment, after finding him guilty of violating the supply regulation. (Petra)

SEMINAR ON HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION: A two-day specialised symposium on the design and setting up of high voltage power transmission lines started here Tuesday, with a number of Italian experts and representatives of the institutions concerned attending. Addressing the symposium, which was organised by the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) in cooperation with an Italian firm was the JEA Assistant Director General Walid Al Ja'ouni, who outlined the importance of using such lines. Ja'ouni called on participants to look into the possibility of promoting the use of this method, in view of the technical characteristics it enjoys. The use of such lines will save more than 60 per cent of the area needed for setting up pylons. (Petra)

Two Japanese volunteers arrive for 2-year service

AMMAN (J.T.) — Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) programme has dispatched two young Japanese to Jordan to perform volunteer services offering technical assistance to Jordanian universities for two years.

Mr. Yasuhiro Morino, a photographer, has been assigned to the Institute of Archaeology & Anthropology of the Yarmouk University. Miss Izumi Tokoku, who is a swimming coach, has been assigned to the Physical Education College at the University of Jordan.

JOCV has about 25 years experience in volunteer service and every year sends about 800 young people to 40 different countries.

According to the bilateral agreement between Japan and Jordan, dispatch of volunteers to Jordan has started in 1986 and 16 volunteers, such as systems engineers, electronic engineers, architects, nurses and others, are already contributing to the development of different public institutions in the Kingdom.

Committee to hold seminar on prevention of crime

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher National Committee for Combating Crime will hold a seminar in Amman in June under the slogan "more comprehensive concept for the prevention of crime."

The seminar, according to a committee spokesman, aims to enlist public support for police work in curtailing the number of crimes and spread public awareness on matters related to the prevention of crime in general.

The committee which met under the chairmanship of Public Security Department Director Abdul Hadi Al Majali decided to set up six sub-committees to make arrangements for the seminar, to work out a programme for the meetings, to take charge of the working papers which will be reviewed by the participants and to follow up the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations.

Last June, a symposium on crime in the Jordanian society was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and the participants highlighted the role of family, social institutions and the various official organisations in educating people on crimes and means of countering them.

A report published last April said that there were 18,129 crimes in Jordan during 1987, down from 19,579 in the previous year.

Majali was quoted then as saying that 1987 witnessed 68 murder cases of which 61 were discovered and that most of the murders were committed on moral grounds.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ A computer exhibition displaying a new line of computers with greater performance and new power at Marriott Hotel in Amman.
- ★ The Arab book exhibition that includes books on different topics at Yarmouk University.
- ★ An exhibition of Korean photos, books and handicrafts at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ An art exhibition by Paul and Emanuel Giragossian at Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation — 6:00 p.m.
- ★ An exhibition of lithographies by French artist Jean-Paul Chambas at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ The Arab Contemporary Artists exhibition at Al Wasiti Gallery.

FILM

- ★ A film entitled "Heart Like a Wheel" which is shown as part of the American Centre's 1989 film festival at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8:00 p.m.



Lawzi holds talks with Qatari envoy

SPEAKER of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi meets in his office Tuesday with Qatar's Ambassador Mubarak Al Kuwari. They reviewed relations between the two countries and cooperation in different fields (Petra photo)

Seminar discusses application of information in science

AMMAN (Petra) — Participants in the four-day seminar on teaching science and technology in the Arab World, Tuesday discussed four working papers on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) contribution to educational and scientific projects in the Arab World, and the experiences of Jordan and Kuwait in the field of application of the information in science and technology.

The first paper, presented by head of UNESCO's International Information Network (IIN), deals with the future aspirations of UNESCO, its role in holding advisory meetings and seminars, and its contribution to the projects proposed by the different Arab countries.

The second paper, presented by head of the Teacher Training Department at the Ministry of Education in Jordan, Hassan Sabri Al Usta, who is also representative of the Jordanian Information Network, touches upon the role of the information network in developing science books for the compulsory stage.

The paper stressed the importance of the national information network in achieving coordination among the various educational and scientific institutions and called for transforming the network into a national centre for the exchange of information and expertise.

The paper recommended that a special centre for the IIN publications and documents be set up to supply all concerned institutions with the necessary information.



Qasem receives Omani envoy

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem Tuesday received the credentials of the newly appointed Omani Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Ibn Sultan Al Bour. Saidi (Petra photo)

Jordan will not launch anti-meningitis vaccination

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Health Tuesday announced that it will not launch a vaccination campaign against meningitis upon the recommendation of a specialised health committee.

It said that the committee studied all the reported cases in the Kingdom, and revised information pertaining to the diseases in neighbouring countries. The committee found that there was no need for a vaccination campaign.

The announcement said that residents or non-resident visitors in Jordan will not be required to take the anti-meningitis vaccination. The health committee groups representatives of the Ministry of Health, the National Medical Institution, the Royal Medical Services, the University of Jordan and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees.

University of Jordan holds seminar on preventing spread of diseases

AMMAN (J.T.) — A seminar on means to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in hospitals was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and the participants highlighted the role of family, social institutions and the various official organisations in educating people on crimes and means of countering them.

A representative of the faculty of nursing which organised the seminar said in a speech that nurses can play a key role in preventing the spread of diseases through providing proper care to patients and maintaining a 24 hour watch over the general condition of patients.

Dr. Mahmud Abu Khalaf, head of the surgery at the Jordan University Hospital, presented a working paper dealing with various inflammatory diseases and Dr. Nabil Khayyat presented a paper on the use of antiseptics.

Also Tuesday a workshop on the environment situation at the Khirbet Al Samra wastewater treatment plant was held at the University of Jordan.

The workshop, organised by the Water Research and Supply Centre (WRSC), was attended by a group of Swedish experts, now on a visit to Jordan, to assess the amount of pollution and help the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment to work out a national strategy on the protection of the environment.

The Swedish team heard a briefing on the treatment of wastewater at Khirbet Al Samra near Zarqa and the adverse effects of waste on surface and underground water between the Zarqa River and the King Talal Dam. Biological, hydrological and chemical aspects related to the Khirbet Al Samra plant were reviewed at the meeting.



The University of Jordan holds a seminar on the prevention of infectious diseases. (below) A workshop, organised by the university's Water Research and Study Centre, is attended by a group of Swedish experts.



The WRSC has said in a bulletin that the water quality of the Zarqa River, as reflected by the different physical, chemical and biological parameter studies, has been impaired.

The Zarqa River is the natural effluent of the main urbanisation centre in Jordan. Sixty per cent of the inhabitants of Jordan are living in its catchment area.

Also, the main industries are concentrated in this area. Domestic, as well as industrial waste, whether treated or untreated, find its way to the river which flows into the major recipient, the King Talal reservoir.

Technical designs for Al Wahdah Dam project to be ready next week

AMMAN (Petra) — An American consultancy firm will finalise work on technical designs and tender documents for the projected Al Wahdah Dam shortly to be ready for a general meeting by the middle of this month before international firms can be invited to carry out the project, according to an announcement by the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Secretary General Mohammad Bani Hani.

Bani Hani said that the final documents will be reviewed by JVA experts and four international specialists at the coming meeting.

Last October financial, technical and construction experts from seven countries and six development and financing agencies met in Amman and discussed means of financing the \$440 million project which will generate electricity and collect huge amounts of water for the benefit of Jordan and Syria.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Ahmad Dakhqan said at the time of the meeting, that Jordan was seeking at least \$260 million to partly finance the dam which will be built on the Yarmouk River to hold back an estimated 225 million cubic metres of water for irrigation on both sides of the border, and to produce electric power for both countries.

Under an agreement signed by Jordan and Syria in September 1987 the Kingdom, heading towards water shortages in the next decade, will use most of the dam's water for drinking or irrigation while Syria will get 75 per cent of the generated hydro electric power.

A contract for the construction of the dam's diversion tunnel was awarded last August to a consortium of Jordanian, Syrian and Italian companies at the cost of JD 2.5 million to be completed in 12 months paving the way for the construction of the dam which is expected to start in September 1989.

When built, the dam would form a reservoir at least six and a half square kilometres in area filled with water, gathered largely from flood water, springs and rain water in the Yarmouk River Basin.

Meanwhile, the JVA reported Tuesday that dams built to hold back water in the country are now holding a total of 78 million cubic metres of water to be used for irrigation purposes.

A JVA spokesman said that a reservoir behind the King Talal Dam alone holds 61,300,000 cubic metres. He added that rain water expected in February and March could be sufficient to fill all reservoirs to capacity.

He also exchanged with Gharib views about laws governing free zones in Egypt and Jordan.

He said that the private sectors of Egypt and Jordan will take a very constructive step to corroborate the sub-regional economic bloc whose foundations could be laid at a meeting to be held in Amman by the middle of this month.

The ACC idea was taken up by the council's meeting held at Luxor and attended by businessmen from both countries. Abu Hassan noted.

The council issued a statement at the end of the meeting announcing the intention to set up a group to prepare the working papers, and agreed to prepare a list of industrial and agricultural products from Egypt and Jordan to be marketed in either country.

CAIRO (J.T.) — The Jordanian-Egyptian Businessmen's Council will hold a meeting in Amman in the coming month to review a working paper on the projected Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) that would group Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and North Yemen, according to the head of the Jordanian side to the Council meeting, Mamdouh Abu Hassan.

Abu Hassan was commenting upon his return from Luxor at the conclusion of the council meeting there.

He said that the private sectors of Egypt and Jordan will take a very constructive step to corroborate the sub-regional economic bloc whose foundations could be laid at a meeting to be held in Amman by the middle of this month.

The conference, to be organised by the Ministry in cooperation with the Royal Scientific Society and the University of Jordan, is expected to discuss numerous issues pertaining to water resources in neighbouring Arab states and exchanged information related to water problems, as well as coordination of policies among Arab countries to preserve and exploit water resources, the announcement said.

Last November, Minister of Water and Irrigation Ahmad Dakhqan, at a regional seminar in Amman to discuss management of water resources, said that Jordan expected to require nearly 266 million cubic metres of water for annual consumption by the year 2005.

He said that the ministry plans to intensify efforts to provide sufficient amounts through prospecting for new resources and through the construction of dams and drilling additional artesian wells.

The seminar issued a set of recommendations which urged governments and the public to encourage the use of special techniques that can ensure better financial and administrative management of water resources.

Dakhqan Tuesday visited Zarqa Water Department and inspected water projects being implemented by the Water Authority of Jordan (W.A.J.).

The minister inspected work on a new network being laid in the district and urged the department to speed up work on the Khirbet Al Samra sewerage network.

revenue of \$69.761 million and an overall expenditure of \$58.479 million.

According to a company official, last year a total of 600,000 passengers and 40,000 tonnes of goods were transported through the company along the Aqaba-Nweibeh route.

The company was established towards the end of 1987 to promote trade and transportation operations between the three countries.

The company's general assembly earlier approved a 1989 budget which includes a total

quouqi, Director General of the Egyptian Maritime Transportation Corporation.

The three will review the company's operations in the past year, plans for 1989, and measures to overcome obstacles impeding the development of the Aqaba-Nweibeh land-sea route which serves the three countries.

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Jordan Times Advertising Department.

Great hope

EDGING by the number of oil companies exploring for oil in Jordan it would not be long before this country will strike oil in commercial quantities and thus herald a new boom era at least as big as the one that ended in the 1970s. There are almost half a dozen oil concessions on the four corners of the world which are energetically exploring for oil in Jordan and have invested big amounts of money in the process.

It goes without saying that the number of interested parties engaged in locating commercial quantities and the magnitude of their total investment suggest that the risk of exploring for oil in Jordan is worth taking and that sooner or later oil will be found within the sands of Jordan. When it is achieved a new economic miracle would be born. Meanwhile, there are many other man-made miracles at hand that can still be attained ranging from further consolidating export-oriented industries to balance our trade, with a view to stem the outflow of hard currency from Jordanian pockets. Accordingly, it would not be long before the Jordanian dinar would be able to recoup its full value on the international market and end soundly and effectively a cycle of artificial doom that some circles purposely sown.

Thus, the future economic and fiscal picture of Jordan is brightened up sooner than later. Accordingly, it would be advisable to avoid introducing more austerity measures over and above the ones taken on Aug. 13 of last year for fear that any additional steps may precipitate recessionary consequences that the country can ill afford. If anything, now is the time to abstain from affecting measures that may dampen the overall economy even more. With the remarkable successes thus far achieved to curb the outflow of hard currency from Jordanian pockets, whether official or private, time is ripe to heat up the economy a little bit more and above the export oriented sector of the Jordanian economy. In addition, and in view of the inflationary pressures of the devaluation of the dinar, as far as the average citizen is concerned, Jordanians are entitled to some relief from the government on acceptable scales to just to the new cost of living in the country. With the prices of almost all commodities and services in Jordan undergoing increases, while salaries and incomes remained flat, it would also be in order to receive new guidelines in the state sector on how to cope with this human problem affecting most, if not, all Jordanians. In view of the bright economic future of Jordan, there is room to alleviate the plight of the average Jordanian by affecting any adjustments to cope with the new economic realities.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Arabi daily on Tuesday launched an attack on Israel's Foreign Minister Moshe Arens who it said is trying to break away from the isolation imposed on the Jewish state by blaming Jordan not entering into direct negotiations with Israel for a Middle East settlement. The paper said Arens is accusing Jordan of being a "settlement" because it might anger the Palestinians living in the occupied Arab territories. It said Arens wants Jordan to take this step because the peace process cannot go ahead until it. But he seems to have forgotten Jordan's clear position which calls for a comprehensive solution to the whole issue and a separate treaty, the paper noted. Jordan has already signed the Camp David accords because they were not designed to achieve a lasting peace nor did they cater for the rights of the Palestinian people, the paper noted. It said that Jordan has been invited for an international conference to be given full powers and to discuss peace based on justice and guaranteed by the superpowers and the U.N. Security Council. Anything short of that is by no means acceptable to the Kingdom, the paper added. Arens, the paper noted, seems to have forgotten that Jordan was the first Arab country to extend support and backing for the Palestinian cause, and therefore, Jordan has nothing to fear since this is a moral stand, supported and backed by all Arab states and the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily describes the close cooperation obtained by Baghdad and Amman as a balanced and well-entrenched endeavour leading towards unity of Arab countries. An Al Majali, who is also paper's editor, says that Amman is doing bridges of close cooperation with Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Sanaa and other Arab capitals in a bid to enhance the solidarity and pave the way for a greater measure of Arab cooperation that can lead to unity. The Jordanian press in this direction, the writer adds, remove all forms of despair and hopelessness in the hearts of the Arab masses and boosts the sphere of consensus that has been prevailing in the Arab world since the successful Amman summit. The Arab Cooperation Council which will group Iraq, North Yemen, Jordan and Kuwait can be described as a crowning of the King's endeavours in Arab arena, says the writer. Jordan, acting upon directives by Majesty King Hussein, has been forging ahead with a policy of close cooperation with all Arab states which the writer points out can open the way for a greater and stronger unity in the Arab world of the Arab World. He said such grouping, for which King is now paving the way, is a guarantee for the Arabs in the face of challenges and for bolstering the Arab order.

Yesterday's daily newspaper tackled a statement by Prime Minister Zaid Rifai in the Kuwaiti Al Watan newspaper in which the prime minister dwelt on Arab affairs and Jordan's endeavours to find a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The paper referred to the prime minister's disclosure that King Hussein will go to Washington shortly to discuss the Middle East question, and said that this will be part of Jordan's on-going efforts to end the problem. The paper referred to Rifai's remarks at the Jordanian endeavours to rally the Arab ranks and strengthen Arab solidarity, and said that the current drive to convene an Arab summit and the King's contacts with Arab leaders point to Jordan's orientation towards removing obstacles in the path of such important meeting, where the Arab states thrash out differences and chart a new strategy for the future. The paper said that the prime minister's statements were detailed and concentrated, shedding more light on Jordan's policies on the national and external fronts.

Iran: Winds of change blow stronger

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

NICOSIA, Cyprus — Iranian leaders of all types are calling for greater political and social freedom now that the eight-year war with Iraq appears over and the Islamic revolution enters its second decade.

As the country prepares to face the challenges of peace, progressive religious figures are urging fresh interpretations of the Sharia, Islam's religious laws and cornerstone of Iran's rigid political and social system.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran's supreme authority, has thrown his weight behind the trend.

In a Jan. 4 decree, seen as one of his most important pronouncements since the February 1979 revolution that toppled the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, he stressed the need for Islam to adapt to the modern world.

He called on the conservative Council of Guardians, which has repeatedly blocked key economic legislation on the grounds it violates Islam's tenets, to avoid obscure theological arguments that will "drive us to dead-ends."

Khomeini, 88 and reported to be in poor health, was reflecting a groundswell of sentiment among influential religious and political leaders seeking to move Iran toward the *dabeyeh fahr*, or decade of dawn.

But travellers from Tehran said many Iranians refer to it as the *dabeyeh zajr*, a Farsi which translates as "decade of suffering."

Khomeini, the revolutionary patriarch who during the war repeatedly appealed to his bickering officials for unity, last November refused requests he intervene to settle a fierce debate over economic policy and urged open discussion.

He decreed that "academic argument should be given a high place in Islam and encouraged, rather than suppressed" because of "dogmatic interpretations and

authoritarian outlooks."

The progressive moves are taking place at the same time as a new wave of dissident executions. Most accounts say hundreds have died.

This, a power struggle for supremacy in the post-Khomeini era, and the influence that Iran's deeply entrenched mullahs, retain among much of the 50-million-strong population, has made many people skeptical about just how far the reforms will go.

Nonetheless, there are clear indications that the winds of change are blowing stronger after years of fiery rhetoric and what parliament speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani called "childish slogans" in what has been a largely closed society since the revolution.

Iran's press has long been freer than many people in the West appreciate. But freedom of expression and other liberties were restricted during the war.

Hojatoleslam Mohammad Javad Khatami, a middle-ranking cleric who has become Iran's most popular newspaper columnist, took a swipe recently at traditionalist mullahs.

"In the same way that permitting what God has forbidden is forbidden, forbidding what God has permitted is also forbidden," he wrote in Tehran's *Ettela'at* daily.

"I am puzzled why our religious authorities consider the safe course to be obsessively guarding the fortress of what has been forbidden rather than guarding the flower garden of what is indeed permitted by God," he said.

Rafsanjani, viewed as Tehran's leading pragmatist and architect of efforts to open up Iran after a decade of isolation, noted candidly in a recent speech: "We still have a lot of unanswered questions with regard to society."

"We have not come forward with clear principles in our foreign policy... or in religious matters that vastly differ today from earlier eras of Islam."

After the sacrifices of the war,

in which by some estimates 1 million Iranians were killed, Iranians want to enjoy the fruits of peace.

Scheherazade Daneshku, a Paris-based Iranian analyst, noted that Iranian leaders like Rafsanjani understand that "some of the more puritanical and uncompromising aspects of Islamic rule will almost certainly have to be dispensed with."

Khomeini's designated successor, Ayatollah Hussein-Ali Montazeri, who has long urged wider freedoms, bluntly told Islamic students last October: "Freedom of expression... is the natural and constitutional right of every individual."

"The officials of this country and the revolution, who experienced the bitter taste of repression under the monarchy, should take notice of this and avoid the assumption we no longer need freedom of expression. Should we grow intolerant to challenges to our ideas, these challenges will inevitably turn into bullets."

Parliamentary deputy Elias Hazzati declared during a debate on post-war reconstruction and the future shape of society: "Ten years after the revolution, we have to bitterly admit that we have not been successful in developing and reforming the systems we inherited from the former regime."

Kermani noted in one of his columns: "There are still people who refuse to listen to the radio, watch television or believe that women should not participate in marches and Friday prayers. Let alone parliament."

"Some citizens are still heard complaining about the songs aired on the radio and TV. They are against women appearing on television as newscasters, interviewers and actresses and doubt the advisability of consorting with foreign non-Muslims, infidels, Communists and women who do not wear the chador."

Khomeini said in a letter Oct. 5 to Hojatoleslam Mohammad Hussein Qadiri, a senior religious



scholar who questioned the ayatollah's ruling that chess and musical instruments were permissible under Islamic law: "According to your reverence's interpretation of the hagiological tradition, modern civilisation should be destroyed and people should go back to mud huts or live in deserts forever."

Khomeini urged Qadiri to "avoid being affected by sanctimonious and illiterate mullahs" who many Iranians criticise for burying religion in inflexible tenets and medieval interpretations of the holy Koran.

Kermani noted that Khomeini's precepts are "the start of a new revolution in our

deep-rooted... traditional theology... now is the time to explicitly say that there must be a transformation, a revolution in the way that the huge resources of the rich Shiite theology are being exploited."

He said the brand of theology presented by backward-looking clerics is "not capable of managing a home or a village, let alone a country."

Mohammad Hashemi, Rafsanjani's brother and head of the state-run television and radio network, called in a November interview in the network's *Soroush* magazine for greater media freedom to air grievances and criticism of the government.

Official action, he said, had kept his organisation from "doing our duty in reflecting criticisms to the extent that our mission requires."

Soroush also carried an interview with Mahdi Nasari, editor-in-chief of the *Kayhan* daily, Iran's largest-selling newspaper, in which he said the press has not done enough to criticise the revolution's shortcomings.

"If a society is deprived of the blessing of criticism and critical encounters... throughout the mass media, then it can be said that it is a society facing gradual death and at the very least, decline," he said.

Thatcher takes social crusade to health care

By Peter Gregson
Reuters

LONDON — Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's radical drive to change British society has prescribed a major reshaping of one of the country's most cherished institutions, the National Health Service (NHS).

With the water and electricity utilities shortly set to follow other state monopolies back into private hands, and plans in mind for the coal industry to do the same, attention has turned to one of Britain's last great Socialist citadels.

Since it was created by a Labour government in 1948, the aims and shape of the NHS have hardly changed, providing all Britons with largely free health care.

Run by bureaucrats, and financed by taxes, it ranges from family doctors through community care services to pioneering research hospitals.

Europe's biggest employer, with a workforce of one million, the NHS has an annual budget of £26 billion (\$46 billion) and enjoys what the *Daily Telegraph* called "a special place in the public imagination."

But to Thatcher, whose social reforms have ranged from selling off the gas industry and the telephone network, to promoting greater home and share ownership, nothing is sacred in the crusade to loosen the grip of Socialism and give individuals greater choice and freedom.

A strike by nurses over traditionally low wages and publicity over lengthening hospital waiting lists alarmed Thatcher in early 1988.

A low-key discussion with a few aides about the nurses' dispute quickly developed into a year-long full-scale review of the entire NHS, with the prime minister herself chairing the committee.

The result was draft legislation, known as a white paper, submitted to parliament by Health Secretary Kenneth Clarke at the end of January. Called "working for patients," Thatcher said in a foreword it was "the most far-reaching reform of the National Health Service in its 40-year history."

Classically Thatcherite in mould, it sparked a predictable response in the mainly pro-government daily press with headlines such as "Maggie puts patients first."

While maintaining the commitment to free services, it aims to create a health care market in which doctors and clinics can

compete for business.

Patients will have more choice of physician and treatment and can pay for extra frills while in hospital, such as a single room, a television, telephone and choice of meals.

"Doctors will have real incentive to work harder and attract people's custom," said Clarke.

"Popular hospitals which treat more patients will receive more money."

The white paper said: "Quality of service and value for money will be more rigorously audited."

But minority Social Democratic Party leader David Owen, a medical doctor, called it an "unhealthy prescription." Saying it would create a competitive, commercial market in which standards will suffer, he added: "For those with poor health records and low incomes there is naught for their comfort."

The opposition Labour Party said the bill put a price tag on every treatment and put "profits before patients."

Labour health spokesman Robin Cook said his proposals, to be brought in over a three-year period after approval by parliament expected later this year, made it clear the NHS was being sized up to be sold off.

The bill also provides for wide delegation of responsibility to hospitals and doctors from the country's 200 health authorities, a managerial structure seen by many civil servants as archaic and aloof from day-to-day problems.

Large hospitals will be self-governing and for the first time family doctors will have budgets, including fixed ceilings on spiralling drug costs.

Clarke, put in charge of the review after being appointed health secretary only last July, told critics and doubters within the ruling Conservative Party that the changes would not harm patient care.

"They reflect a change of pace rather than a fundamental change of direction. An NHS that is run better will be an NHS that can care better," he added.

Thatcher pledged: "The National Health Service will continue to be available to all, regardless of income, and to be financed mainly out of general taxation."

Outgoing NHS chief executive Len Peach, who stepped down after three years at the helm as the white paper was published, said he was confident the reforms would work given time.

But he warned: "Changing the NHS is like turning a supertanker. It is a long time before it answers to the helm."

'India, Pakistan to launch missile race'

By Moses Manoharan
Reuters

NEW DELHI — The threat of an arms race between India and Pakistan could revive tensions between the two countries that only six weeks ago seemed anxious to bury age-old differences.

The competition for high-tech weaponry could sour apparently warm relations between Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Pakistan's new Premier Benazir Bhutto at a summit meeting last December.

Analysts and diplomats say Gandhi may adopt a vote-grabbing bellicose stand ahead of general elections he must call by the end of the year and return to the headline posture of his mother and predecessor Indira.

In Pakistan, the independent power of the military could force Bhutto to mirror the tough policies of former strongman President Mohammed Zia Ul Haq, the analysts say.

Even before Pakistani army chief Mirza Aslam Beg announced this week that Pakistan recently test-fired surface-to-surface rockets, Gandhi had warned that India would take steps to protect itself.

"In these circumstances, we cannot sit and watch the situation. We will take necessary steps and not allow the security of our country to be endangered," he said last Friday of reports of the Pakistani test firing.

"This is a very serious development," said a senior Indian government official.

The death of Zia, a former army chief, in an unexplained plane crash last August, did not ease tensions between the military and civilian politicians in Pakistan, one Indian analyst said.

"There is clearly a tug-of-war in Pakistan between the political

leadership and the military," said A.P. Venkateswaran of the independent Centre for Policy Research.

"With the realisation of what is going on in Pakistan, no Indian government can afford to be complacent," said Venkateswaran, India's former foreign secretary.

K. Subrahmaniyam, a former head of the government-funded Indian Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, said India had no choice but to go ahead with its own rocket test.

He said the Pakistani missile was too costly and accurate to be carrying a conventional warhead.

Beg said the missiles had a range of 300 kilometres and 80 kilometres and represented a landmark achievement because they and their guidance systems were indigenously produced.

India, which has fought three wars with Pakistan since both became independent of Britain in

1947, tested a nuclear device in 1974 but insists its nuclear programme is peaceful.

Islamabad has always denied having nuclear weapons but New Delhi says Pakistan has the capability to make a nuclear bomb.

India has tested the short-range Prithvi missile, comparable to the Soviet Scud B missile used by Iraq to attack Tehran in the Gulf war.

New Delhi has also developed the intermediate range two-stage Agni missile but appears to have delayed test firing it for political reasons.

"When they go through with the test, as we are sure they will as soon as the time is ripe, India and Pakistan will be on the first rung of a ladder that could raise tensions on the sub-continent to dangerous levels," one Western diplomat who declined to be named, said.

Mozambique eager for Soviet debt forgiveness

By Carlos Cardoso

MAPUTO, Mozambique — On January 12 the news reached Maputo that Soviet economist Sergei Sergeev had told "Moscow News" that the USSR was to cancel the debt of 22 nations, including that of Mozambique.

However an official at the Soviet embassy in Maputo, Andrei Pokrovski, was adamant. "It's premature to say such a thing," he told me. "Up until now we cannot say whether we are going to cancel the debts of these countries, including the Mozambican debt, whether we shall establish a moratorium of 100 years, or whether such a moratorium would cover all or a part of the debt."

"In the case of Mozambique, everything is at a preliminary stage," he continued. "It is too early to say anything specific."

A series of telephone calls to top government officials in Maputo quickly established that Moscow had not yet told Mozambique anything about cancelling the debt. But Sergeev's statement did stir up expectations: "Wouldn't it be nice?" commented Esmeralda Fernandes of the central Banco de Mozambique, an experienced debt negotiator. For a country ravaged by war, with a begging bowl economy, writing off a debt of 1.6 billion roubles (\$2.6 billion) would indeed be a morale booster.

The debt includes both economic and "special" state credits. The latter category includes military equipment, which is the largest slice of the debt, the Soviet Union being Mozambique's main supplier of military hardware.

Pokrovski recalled President Gorbachev's speech at the United

Nations in New York of 7 December, in which debt forgiveness was first raised, and repeated the official Soviet position: that the problem of developing countries' foreign debt to the USSR should be placed in the context of a "global solution" to indebtedness.

But, he added, Moscow "is prepared to take unilateral steps" including the cancellation of the debt "in some cases". He recalled Mozambique's June 1988 debt rescheduling agreement with the western Club de Paris — which includes a 20 year moratorium on a \$800 million debt with a ten year grace period. "That's a basis for negotiation, but we can go further."

The matter will be discussed in detail on February 27 at the next meeting of the joint Mozambican/Soviet Commission for Economic Technical and Commercial Cooperation in Moscow.

Pokrovski went on to recall the Soviet proposal for an international conference on Africa's foreign debt, to be held under U.N. auspices, and with the participation of international finance institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and the Club de Paris, as well as the creditor and debtor nations.

The USSR, Pokrovski said, has proposed a series of principles on which such a conference should be based. These include:

- acceptance by the participants that "the debt cannot be paid";
- acceptance of the "intimate links" between the economic, political and social aspects of indebtedness;
- acceptance of the "organic interconnections" of the foreign debt with other international problems such as the liberalisa-

tion of world trade, a reduction in military expenditure, limits on the arms trade, and the resolution of regional conflicts.

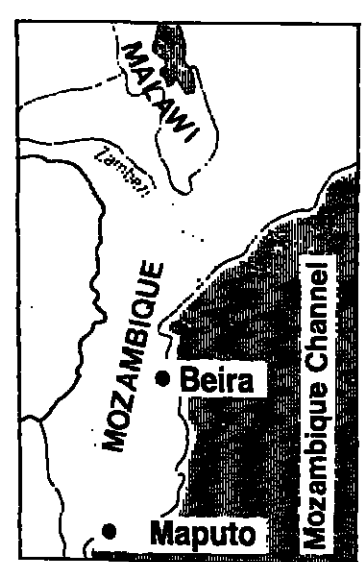
The USSR, Pokrovski stressed, is also seeking guarantees of financial inflows to developing countries, and that situations of financial dependence will not be used to threaten the sovereignty of underdeveloped nations.

As for Soviet cooperation with Mozambique, Pokrovski was highly critical. "Our cooperation has been heavily biased towards Soviet technical assistance," he said. "In most cases, this has given negative results. We want to move from technical assistance to other forms of economic cooperation based on the creation of joint companies that give profits to both partners."

That would indeed be a major change. I remember, on a grey, autumn day in the Bulgarian seaside resort of Varna, in 1984, a smiling Samora Machel — the late president of Mozambique — coming out of a meeting with Bulgarian Communist leader Todor Zhivkov.

Machel had every reason to be pleased. He had long supported the idea of joint companies, criticising technical assistance, which usually meant losses, because of the poor qualifications of a lot of incoming technicians from East European countries and the dismal lack of qualification of most Mozambican managers.

In earlier days the Soviet and East European view was that the establishment of joint companies would imply the extraction of surplus value from a foreign labour force — which would have constituted a violation of basic principles of Marxism. But in Varna, Zhivkov had finally accepted Machel's point of view. Pokrovski dismissed the old



concepts as "a caricature of Marxism". He argued that "without the accumulation of capital economic mechanisms cannot function: what is important is to respect the principle of mutual profits in any joint company".

He said that under the current policy of "perestroika" (restructuring), Soviet companies will have direct access to the international market, and will handle their own bank accounts in accordance with normal business principles. This means that in future Mozambique could be doing business directly with individual Soviet companies. — PANOS features.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171



ANTLERS FOR MEDICINE INDUSTRY: Raising Siberian antler deer is one of the most profitable animal husbandries in the Highland Altai Autonomous Region, South-East Siberia. The Abaisky state farm has a ranch on which deer are raised for their antlers, processed into valuable hormone-based medicines. The ranchmen led by P. Popov harvested a record 9.7 kilograms of antlers from each of the 866 animals this season. (V. Sadchikov/TASS)

Tabs at Reagan, jurors fun — light sides of North trial

By James Vicini
Reuter

WASHINGTON — Newspaper cartoonists are having a field day with the ruling in the Iran-contra trial that only people who know nothing about Oliver North's role in the scandal will be selected as jurors.

The perfect juror is former President Ronald Reagan, according to the cartoonists. One cartoon showed Reagan sitting in the jury box, with the caption: "He was the only juror we could find who knew absolutely nothing about the Iran-contra affair."

Reagan, in interviews before he left office last month, insisted he still did not know all the details of what happened during the Iran-contra scheme, the worst scandal of his administration.

'The three stooges'

Federal Judge Gerhard Gesell has pressed ahead in seeking an impartial jury, and recalled his experience as one of the judges who presided over some of the cases arising from the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s.

Gesell said a woman was seated as a juror on one of the Watergate trials after she said she changed her baby's diapers whenever the congressional hearings on the scandal came on the television.

In the Iran-contra trial, a prospective juror offered a similar comment. She said she may have caught a glimpse of North testifying to Congress but did not pay any attention, adding: "It was like looking at the three stooges."

Diminished 'Olliemania'

When North testified in July 1987 before the congressional committees that investigated activities, a wave of



Oliver North

"Olliemania" swept the country, with posters of the retired Marine lieutenant colonel and even "Ollie for president" buttons.

But at the trial there has been no such outpouring of support.

The number of reporters and sketch artists in the courtroom usually exceeded the number of spectators, which has dwindled as jury selection has dragged on.

And only once, during a brief recess, has a supporter come forward asking for North's autograph.

Identification problem

Some prospective jurors have been unable even to identify North, who sits at the defence table flanked by three of his lawyers.

Asked if he could pick out North, a hearing mechanic scanned the courtroom and said: "I'm not sure if it's that guy there blinking his eye. He's just constantly winking."

North, who has intently studied each juror, then gave the juror a thumbs-up sign as the courtroom erupted in laughter.

Massive legal fees

The soaring legal fees already spent in the case have exceeded the amount of money at issue in the scandal — \$14 million that was diverted to the Nicaraguan contra rebels from secret U.S. arms sales to Iran in 1985-86.

The office of the special prosecutor in the case has spent more than \$13 million in taxpayers' money investigating the scandal and bringing the case to trial, while North's legal bill reportedly has topped \$3 million.

See but don't speak

Lawyers for the U.S. government intelligence agencies can have seats in the crowded courtroom to watch the trial, but they effectively have been barred from saying anything.

Gesell granted a prosecution request that seats be made available for lawyers from the Central Intelligence Agency, the super-secret National Security Agency and the Departments of Justice, State and Defence.

But he made clear they cannot interrupt the trial. "I don't intend to have this case run by three or four security gurus," he said.

The lawyer and the jury

North's chief defence lawyer, Brendan Sullivan, often has been sympathetic when questioning prospective jurors who have been summoned to the courtroom for what is expected to be a five-month trial.

At one point, he told a potential juror that even he had received a notice for jury duty requiring that he appear in a Washington court in early March.

Gesell peered down from the bench and said: "I'll get you excused."

Arab farming — lessons from Africa

The small farmer in Africa is winning greater recognition but in her — or his role — is a lesson for the Arab world, which is battling to overcome dependence on costly food imports.

By George Crooks

LONDON — As the Arab world considers the impact in the coming decades of its food dependency the lessons of Africa are sobering and instructive.

In less than half a century of independence agriculture in the African countries has gone through major upheavals, hit by natural disasters and governmental neglect. Only recently has it been receiving attention of planners and agricultural strategists.

In the beginning newly independent states paid lip-service to agriculture or embarked on impractical projects. There are disturbing analogies to be drawn between that early period of policy blunders in Africa and the neglect and complacency that agriculture has experienced in parts of the Arab world.

In interviews with scores of farmers, the New York-based Hunger Project has emphasised the role now being played by the small farmers in Africa — a role that many experts believe should be played by the small farmer in the Arab world as well. A large part of the Arab population is African — from Egypt to Mauritania — and the lessons are common to both Arab and non-Arab tillers of the land.

Joan Homes, global executive director of the non-profit institution, believes the small-scale farmers of sub-Saharan Africa are "one of the ... greatest resources." Seven out of 10 inhabitants of sub-Saharan Africa are small-scale farmers.

"These tens of millions of men and women are at the heart of the struggle for economic liberation. They are in the front line of the battle to eradicate the persistence of hunger," she notes.

A third of the Arab population, particularly that based in Africa, faces starvation if immediate efforts are not made to augment agriculture in the Arab world, according to recent studies made by Arab and international experts. But rapid urban expansion and — in the Arabian peninsula — lack of manpower and high costs of agricultural production present major challenges.

The Hunger Project's interviews with ordinary farmers revealed the vast untapped resource of expertise in the African farming community. In the traditional Arab agricultural societies, catapulted into a new era by the oil-fuelled prosperity, similar expertise is waiting to be exploited.

Mwalabu Ndonye, a Kenyan interviewed by the Hunger Project, said, "Let anyone come, even experts on agriculture, and ask me how I do things on my farm, and I will tell them."

Another farmer, Ibrahim Seck, from Senegal, said, "We now believe in ourselves ... We believe in our possibilities, in our ability to take our own development into our own hands."

"Farming," said Nigerian Igwe Fred Uzizogwe, "is the only road to success." According to

Oumarou Youssoufou, the Organisation of African Unity delegate at the United Nations, agriculture was "the cornerstone of the (economic) recovery strategy" initiated by African governments, in the mid-1980s.

Professor Adeboye Adedeji, executive secretary of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa, believes that African farmers "are in league with the head of state in trying to promote food self-sufficiency for his country. They are not second-class citizens. They are doing their jobs as farmers, making the greatest contribution to the survival of the nation and the well-being of the people."

Although the spectre of such deprivation may seem removed from the Arab world, parts of the Arab League area are comparable in prevailing conditions to those in sub-Saharan Africa. The need for taking heed and urgent initiatives in obvious, according to experts.

A closer study of the farmer also has demolished their stereotypes. "Rather than being conservative, bound by tradition, and simple (small-scale farmers are) experimenters, risk takers, (and) innovators; intensifiers and

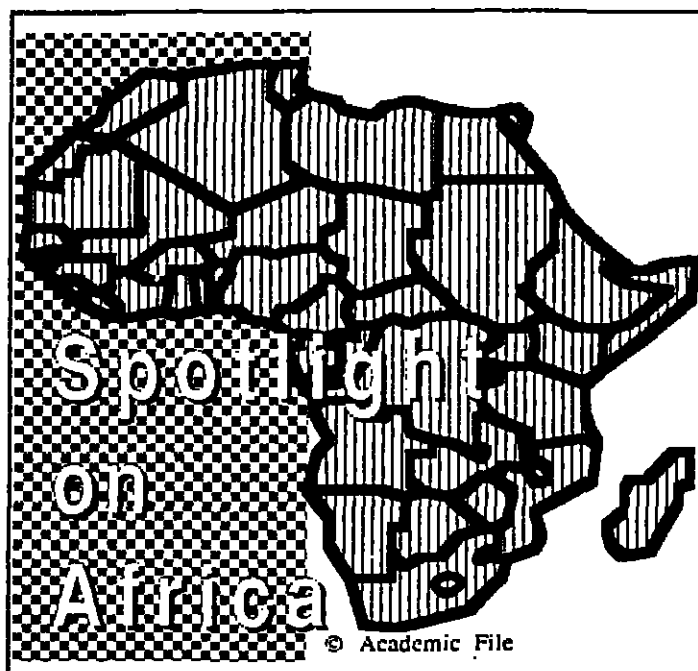
diversifiers; colonisers or pioneers; addicts for new information; practitioners of great common sense; social and economically rational beings," wrote author Robert E. Rhoades.

Two-thirds of all land holdings in Africa are under two hectares, and nearly 96 per cent are of fewer than 10 hectares. The small farmers, therefore, are often among the poorest. Across the continent, urban incomes are four to eight times higher than incomes in agriculture.

African farmers, unlike Arab farmers, are overwhelmingly women. Women working on small farms now produce 90 per cent of the food consumed locally. In most countries, more than 80 per cent of those who earn their living as farmers are women. On average, 22 per cent of all African farm households are headed by women, according to a Hunger Project study.

Until the 1980s the full potential of African farmers went largely untapped. Neglected in favour of other priorities, the farmer was hampered by low prices for crops, lack of access to necessary inputs, and failed government policies.

As a result of the recurrent crises, Africa plunged from self-sufficiency in food in the 1950s to widespread malnutrition and



hunger in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1938, Africa exported cereals; in 1950, Africa was self-sufficient; in 1976 Africa was importing 10 million tons of cereals a year; 13 million tons in 1978 and 31 million tons in 1983. And yet, experts believe, in the long run, most African countries have the physical capacity to feed themselves.

Following the disastrous drought and food shortages of 1983-85, a broad consensus has developed among African leaders that the future of Africa is inextricably bound to agriculture. In support of this, leaders of 28 African nations in a 1985 summit issued the so-called Addis Ababa Declaration, central to which was

the commitment of leaders to significantly improve the agricultural situation in their countries by allocating between 20 and 25 per cent of their total public investment outlay to agriculture by the year 1989.

Three years later, at least 24 countries have reached the target of 25 per cent of their total public investment outlay earmarked for the agricultural sector. The mobilisation of resources alone, of course, is not sufficient to ensure a healthy agricultural picture, according to experts. This is nowhere as relevant as in the Middle East, where investment in agriculture over the years has been vast but output less than impressive.

اربح سيارة فيات اوفو وجوائز قيمة مع ليببتون

شاهدوا الجائزة الأولى في سينيوي

اربح قطع زينة وتحت ملكية

الاستاذة السيدة اهدى عبد الله

السيد محمد وندى وندى وندى

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— سيارة فيات اوفو 1.0 —

— ثلاثة سعة 1.3 لتر من تاشيول —

— جهاز فيديو بالفيديو من تاشيول —

— جهاز تلفزيون 21 بوصة من تاشيول —

— ساعة من تاشيول —

— ساعة ماني 14 بوصة من تاشيول —

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ليببتون ذكية الضيافة الأصلية

Unseen peril poses challenge

By a U.N. correspondent

What is the "greatest challenge" now facing the international community? According to r. Mostafa Tolba, the Executive Director of the United Nations' environment Programme, it is the more obvious nuclear

reat but an unseen peril known the "greenhouse effect."

This phenomenon — another ample of Man-made pollution is resulting in a warming of the earth's climate, with far-reaching consequences, many of them

unaging. The UNEP has been tasked by parent body to lead the international effort to try to limit the warming process. Dr. Tolba is being unduly alarmist in his arning on the potential results the "greenhouse effect."

He is only too aware that some warming is already regarded as inevitable. Scientific experts believe that the world will heat up by between 1.5 and 4.5 degrees Centigrade during the first half of the next century.

This will mean that the planet will be at its warmest for 125,000 years and result in higher sea levels, due to melting ice, and serious disruption to harvests.

There are two main causes. Firstly, mankind is now having to pay the cost of the increasing burning of fossil fuels, especially during recent decades. This has led to a build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Not content with this cumulative effect, Man is now exacerbating the problem by steadily destroying the tropical rainforests. Felling the trees in these vast

areas is itself a major ecological blunder if only because they absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. But the error is grossly compounded when forested tracts are cleared by burning, thus producing even more of the gas.

The other "culprits" are also gases — the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) which have a wide range of commercial uses, including the manufacture of aerosols and refrigerators.

In fact, it is feared that pro rata, the emission of CFCs contributes much more to the "greenhouse effect."

But the main damage they are believed to be causing is to deplete the protective ozone layer above the Earth. Growing international concern over this led to an international agreement

reached at a conference in Montreal last year.

Under this accord, which came into force Jan. 1, signatory nations are pledged to cut their production and use of CFCs by half in three stages by the end of the century.

In the meantime, however, some have concluded that the agreement does not go far enough and that the situation demands greater urgency. Consequently, another international gathering is to be staged in London in March, when about 150 governments are expected to be represented, either at Ministerial or senior official level.

Leading international scientists and industrialists have also been invited to the meeting which Britain is organising in association with UNEP. —Lions features.

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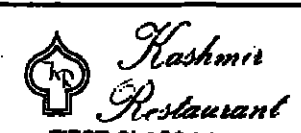
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Bush unveils thrift bailout plan

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bush Tuesday unveiled a plan financed in part by \$50 billion in government bonds to shore up the ailing U.S. savings industry without imposing direct fees on depositors.

"We intend to restore our deposit insurance system to complete health... we will see that the guarantee to depositors is forever honoured," he told a news conference.

Bush said his plan would address economic difficulties faced by the savings and loan industry but would take into account that "unconscionable risk-taking, fraud and outright criminality" had been factors in the crisis.

The plan would:

- Create a financing corporation to issue \$50 billion in government bonds to shore up failing institutions;

- Put the estimated 350 insolvent savings institutions under joint control of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp (FDIC), which oversees commercial banks, and the Federal Savings and Loan Corp (FSLIC);

- Overhaul the regulatory system to give the FDIC the sole authority to insure and set standards for savings banks;

- Add \$50 million to the budget of the Justice Department to "seek out and punish" those responsible for criminal mismanagement of savings and loan institutions.

The Bush plan for the crisis had been billed by the White House as a "permanent and comprehensive" measure. Many experts estimate it could take up to \$100

billion to save the thrift industry. The Bush administration has been struggling to find a way to rescue savings institutions without violating the president's oft-repeated election pledge not to raise taxes.

Bush's senior advisers had been considering slapping a fee on bank customers of 25 cents per \$100 of deposits. But when the plan was leaked to the media, members of Congress and the industry rebelled, claiming it amounted to a tax increase.

The president's new plan — which must be approved by the Democratic-controlled Congress — would raise the fees paid by savings and commercial banks to their insurance corporations, but by no more than seven cents per \$100 of the insurance protection.

Asked if he could guarantee that savings institutions and banks would not pass on the cost of the rescue plan to their customers, Bush replied: "We're not guaranteeing that. I would hope that that would not happen, but there's no guaranteeing what institutions will do. There is no guarantee of passing this on to the consumer, nor is there a guarantee that it won't be passed on."

"Nothing is without pain when you come to solve a problem of this magnitude," he added. The savings and loan crisis has

emerged as Bush's first major domestic policy challenge.

Difficult economic conditions, particularly in the U.S. south-west, undermined the financial integrity of hundreds of savings institutions. But Bush said mismanagement and fraud also played a role.

Punishment

The president said he was determined to "seek out and punish" any savings and loan executives who had put their institutions in jeopardy through criminal behaviour.

"I make you a solemn pledge that we will make every effort to recover assets diverted from these institutions and to place behind bars those who have caused losses through criminal behaviour," he emphasised.

As part of the effort to punish those abusing the system, Bush said he would order the Justice Department to double the personnel involved in investigations.

"Let those who would take advantage of the public trust and put at risk the savings of American families anticipate that we will seek them out, pursue them and demand the most severe penalties," the president said.

Bush has had to grapple with the tough task of mapping a strategy that will prop up the industry without costing the federal government so much that it would jeopardise his domestic spending priorities, which he will outline in an address to Congress Thursday.

Initial reaction in the Congress to Bush's plan seemed to be positive.

"He (Bush) has hit a home run," said congressman Jim Leach, a Republican on the House of Representatives Banking Committee.

He said he hoped Congress would expedite consideration of the plan, with final action before Easter.

Savings and loan institutions traditionally have concentrated on offering mortgages to home buyers and are monitored by their own federal regulator, the Federal Home Loan Bank Board.

Commercial banks, which are regulated by other agencies, have mainly made commercial loans.

However, barriers dividing the types of services both offer have been dismantled in the 1980s, and commercial banks now offer mortgages through subsidiaries.

Banks pay a premium of eight cents on each \$100 of deposits to the FDIC, which insures all deposits for savers up to \$100,000. Savings banks pay a premium of about 21 cents to the FSLIC.

Experts say the government insurance fund that guarantees savings and loan deposits of up to \$100,000 is likely to exhaust its resources unless a comprehensive aid package is adopted.

Savings and loan executives have said an increase in insurance premiums could push up the interest rates they charge to borrowers, drive their business to banks and prompt massive withdrawals.

Similarly, commercial banks have said money market funds and other financial institutions could reap a windfall if banks and savings institutions were forced to increase their interest rates.

Iran proposes trade body with GCC

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran has proposed setting up a joint trade chamber with countries member of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), an Iranian official said Tuesday.

"We intend to build up our non-oil trade and have no intention of borrowing for the reconstruction of the war-hit areas, which would take at least 10 years and (cost) \$250 billion," said Ali Naghi Khamooshi, president of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Mines.

Khamooshi is in Abu Dhabi at the head of a five-member Iranian delegation, participating in a

meeting of the newly established Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Commodities. The conference opened Monday with a call for an Islamic common market, patterned after the European common market.

The Islamic chamber was launched recently by the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), which groups 46 Islamic nations. It is expected to be based in Pakistan, one of the leading OIC members.

Representatives of the OIC states, including Iran's foe Iraq, were present at the four-day conference.

The agenda includes imposing an Islamic boycott of Israel and means of improving living conditions for Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories.

"Iran has adopted an open trade policy, allowing the private sector to play a wider role in the reconstruction of the war-damaged economy," Khamooshi told the Associated Press in an interview.

However, he admitted that the Iranian government "would continue to set the guidelines for the private sector."

He did not elaborate on the

extent of government involvement.

He said Iran will submit a formal proposal for the joint trade chamber to the Islamic gathering in Abu Dhabi. The GCC groups Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar.

"Iran will also propose carrying out joint ventures with the GCC members," he added.

Ties between Iran and GCC states, most of whom openly backed Iraq in the eight-year-old Gulf war, began improving after the Aug. 20 ceasefire.

S. Arabia denies exceeding OPEC quota

RIYADH (AP) — Saudi Arabia denied Tuesday reports that the kingdom's oil output in January was above its 4.524 million barrels a day quota decided by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The Saudi Press Agency quoted an unnamed "responsible source" at the ministry of petroleum and mineral wealth as saying that the kingdom had not exceeded its quota "even a little bit" and that what was published about a violation of the quota was "totally fabricated."

The source "affirmed Saudi production in January was a little less than the assigned quota," and noted that output from the

joint production area with Kuwait, known as the Neutral Zone, was also included in the official figure, the agency said.

The New York-based oil newsletter, Petroleum Intelligence Weekly (PIW), reported this week that Saudi Arabia was among five OPEC states in the Gulf region that have violated their assigned quotas under a total OPEC output ceiling of 18.5 million barrels per day.

The ceiling went into effect Jan. 1, curbing unbridled output by the group's 13 member states by more than three million barrels per day to bolster flagging oil prices and raise them to an \$18 per barrel level.

PIW said Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Iran and the United Arab Emirates contributed to make OPEC overshoot its 18.5-million-barrel daily ceiling to 19.7 million barrels last month.

PIW put Saudi output in January around 4.6 million barrels daily, and said that the figure excluded production from the Neutral Zone it shares with Kuwait.

It estimated joint output from the Neutral Zone at 350,000 barrels per day, half of it for Saudi Arabia. That meant that by PIW's estimates, Saudi production for January was close to 4.8 million barrels a day.

Private industry officials in a

survey by AP-Dow Jones have placed Saudi output around 4.4 million barrels per day in January, excluding a 150,000 barrels a day share from the Neutral Zone.

The Neutral Zone output was sold by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for the account of Iraq during its eight-year war with Iran.

Iraq Oil Minister Issam Abdul Rahim Al Chalabi was quoted by a Kuwaiti newspaper Monday as confirming the sales ended Jan. 1, in view of the five-month-old ceasefire with Iran.

Tuesday's statement also was the first indication that Saudi Arabia was including its share of the Neutral Zone production in its overall quota.

Market values worker freight group at £800m

LONDON (R) — A road haulage consortium which was bought from the government by its own workers in 1982 because no one else wanted, was valued at more than £800 million (\$1.4 billion) by the stock market Monday.

The flotation of shares in the NFC, formerly Britain's National Freight Consortium, crowned a rags-to-riches business saga which has made several of an original 10,000 worker-shareholders into millionaires.

Their investment has increased 100-fold with soaring profits by the group, which is now engaged in road transport, home removals and the travel agency business. And Monday's flotation made more big paper profits for the shareholders.

Shares in the group, on public offer for the first time, traded at around £2.50 (\$4.32) compared with a forecast £2 (\$3.46).

They were scarce because few worker-owners were selling. "There are many more buyers at the moment than sellers," said chairman Sir Peter Thompson, who saw the value of his own stake jump more than £1 million (\$1.73 million) to an estimated £3.9 million (\$6.7 million).

The share float sealed NFC's transition from state control in one of the most successful privatisations undertaken by Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

The group's international interests include Allied Van Lines in the United States and a removals network which spans Europe, the Middle East, Asian countries,

Australia and New Zealand.

The flotation added almost £100,000 (\$173,000) to the £250,000 (\$430,000) holdings of about 400 other employees including truck drivers, loaders and typists.

A worker who invested £500 (\$865) in 1982 was worth £50,000 (\$86,500) on paper when the stock exchange opened Monday.

NFC was the ailing road haulage wing of state-owned British Rail when Thompson led the worker buyout. Regular investors, put off by industrial recession, shunned the privatisation scheme.

But Thompson persuaded employees, some of whom mortgaged their homes and invested their savings, to take on the risk. The company is still three-quarters owned by employees, retired workers and their families and Thompson said he was anxious for NFC to remain a family business.

"I for one don't begrudge them at all selling a few shares and having a good holiday or perhaps buying the car they wanted," he said. "But I hope that they will stay there in substance and don't sell and I think that's how they will behave."

Truck driver Roy Howard told reporters: "It's tempting but I'd like to hang on to the shares, keep them for the kids."

The stock exchange has allowed double voting rights for worker shareholders which analysts said gave virtual guaranteed protection against takeover to NFC.

Japan seeks larger participation in IMF

TOKYO (AP) — Japan, seeking a larger role in dealing with Third World debt problems, wants to gain a bigger voice in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by putting in more money, a high-ranking IMF official said Tuesday.

U.S. reluctance to have its power diluted by larger Japanese contributions to organisations like the IMF, however, is slowing

Japan's attempts to assume greater responsibility, the official said.

"Japan wishes to make a special Japanese contribution to the IMF's capital, which would enable it to obtain a higher, stronger position within the IMF," Hermann Onno Christmann, director, chairman of the IMF's Interim Committee, told reporters.

"Most members of the IMF, including Japan, want to see a stronger IMF and World Bank, and that implies a larger capital quota for the IMF," said Ruding. Ruding said the supports Japan's desire to increase its contribution to the IMF as well as a proposal to raise the IMF's total capital fund by between 50 and 100 per cent.

But the United States, which holds enough power to veto measures it does not support, was not convinced of the need for a larger capital fund and "has been reluctant to support a substantial quota increase," Ruding said.

IMF contributions determine members' voting power and provide resources for loans to developing nations. The United

States holds the largest share of voting power, 19.01 per cent, while Japan ranks fifth with 4.7 per cent. IMF decisions require 85 per cent support, he said.

At an IMF meeting last April, former finance minister Kiichi Miyazawa called for Japan's share to be raised to match its economic stature.

Ruding, who is also finance minister of the Netherlands, was in Tokyo for talks with Japanese Finance Minister Tetsuo Murayama and Bank of Japan Governor Satoshi Sumita before travelling to Washington for meetings with U.S. officials.

He criticised the United States and some European nations, saying they relied too heavily on monetary policy to resolve economic problems like their budget deficits, thereby pushing interest rates higher and making it more difficult for developing nations to repay their debts.

Many developing nations have stopped repaying the principal of their debts and Brazil has suspended payments of the interest on its debt.

Ruding praised Japan for offers it has made to provide new united loans in parallel with the IMF and

to extend loans on easy terms to large debtors through its export-import bank, a plan the IMF's Interim Committee said would contribute to economic growth in developing nations.

"Japan is contributing substantially to the resolution of the debt problem with new proposals and by making funds available in various forms," Ruding said.

The Interim Committee, policy-making arm of the 151-member organisation, has urged banks in industrial nations to continue lending money to developing nations despite their accumulated debts, which amounted to \$1.3 trillion at the end of 1987.

U.S. banks had \$96 billion in outstanding loans to Third World nations last year. Japanese banks' accumulated loans to developing countries amounted to \$43.5 billion in 1986, the most recent figures available from the finance ministry.

Last summer, the Group of Seven major industrial democracies advocated forgiving part of Africa's debt.

Japan, one of the seven, since has committed itself to using government funds to write off the debts of the poorest nations.

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Pound Sterling	981.0	990.8	Japanese yen (for 100)	436.3 440.7
Deutschemark	301.7	304.7	Dutch guilder	267.3 270.0
Swiss franc	355.2	358.8	Swedish crown	88.5 89.5
			Italian lira (for 100)	41.3 41.7
			Belgian franc (for 10)	143.6 145.0

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Heavy afternoon trading in options helped to halt a slide but prices still closed lower. The All-Ordinaries Index was down 8.3 at 1,492.1.

TOKYO — Prices firmed to a new record close but profit-taking trimmed early gains and one dealer said the market had slowed down. The Nikkei Index gained 51.90 to 31,880.65.

HONG KONG — Market closed for Lunar New Year holiday.

SINGAPORE — Market closed for Lunar New Year holiday.

BOMBAY — Share prices buckled under institutional selling to close subdued after rallying Monday. Brokers said the market opened firm but failed to attract follow-up support as attention again shifted to political developments.

FRANKFURT — Share prices ended mixed after a thin, volatile session. The Real-Time 30-share Dax Index peaked at an intraday high of 1,352.11 before slipping back to close at 1,344.94.

ZURICH — Shares recovered from a weak and dull opening as a wave of lively buying moved the market higher towards the end of the session. The All-Share Swiss Index closed at 962.3 points, 0.8 point above Monday's close.

PARIS — Shares ended down but were off lows after sharp rises in several including airplane maker Dassault and engineering group Labinal. The price index of monthly settlement stocks ended 0.37 per cent down.

LONDON — Shares recovered much of Monday's fall in trade near the day's highs in late business, reflecting gains on Wall Street and a return of selective buying interest. By 1603 GMT, the FTSE 100 was up 16.9 points to 2,061.2.

NEW YORK — Wall Street stocks were higher but pulling back from their session highs. The Dow was ahead 10 at 2331 in morning trading.

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Borg is hospitalised

MILAN (R) — Former Swedish tennis star Bjorn Borg was rushed to hospital in Milan Tuesday after taking an overdose of barbiturates, a police spokesman said.

Inspector Gianpiero Casaghi at Milan police headquarters refused to comment on a report by the Italian news agency ANSA that Borg had apparently tried to commit suicide.

But he confirmed the former ace had taken an overdose of a barbiturate and said he was in no danger after having his stomach pumped.

Casaghi said Borg, 32, was accompanied to the hospital by his fiancée, Italian singer Loredana Berté, 38, who raised the

alarm around 9 a.m. Tuesday.

The couple, who live together in Milan, announced last month that they planned to marry.

But the Roman Catholic Church said it had turned down Borg's request for a church wedding in Milan this month because both had been married before.

Borg's adviser, Ingmar Alverdal, reported after the church decision that both Borg and Berté "are deeply shocked and don't know what to do next."

Borg retired from professional tennis in 1983. He was one of the world's greatest players in the late 1970s and won a record five consecutive Wimbledon titles between 1976 and 1980.

Borg was previously married to Romanian tennis player Mariana Simionescu. Their marriage ended in divorce after four years. Berté is divorced from an Italian businessman.

Suicide denied

Later in the day his adviser denied speculation in the Italian media that he had tried to commit suicide.

Goes home

Borg, who left the hospital after having his stomach pumped, told reporters with a smile: "I'm all right, it's all over."



Bjorn Borg

so he decided to go to hospital," Alverdal said.

"Borg is such a big name that even a perfectly normal hospital visit would spark this kind of rumour."

Accompanied by his fiancée, Borg returned by taxi to their Milan apartment, where he spoke briefly to journalists before rushing inside.

Swiss lose their ski crown

BEAVER CREEK, Colorado (AP) — Hansjoerg Tauscher of West Germany, a non-winner in three seasons on the world cup circuit, won the gold medal in the weather-delayed men's downhill Monday at the world alpine ski championships.

Tauscher, 21, continuing a tradition of unexpected finishes in world championship competition, was timed in 2 minutes, 10.39 seconds.

Switzerland's Peter Mueller, the defending world champion in the downhill and a favorite in this race, finished 19-hundredths of a second back at 2:10.58 to take the silver medal, and Swiss teammate Karl Alpiger won the bronze in 2:10.67.

Swiss skiers claimed the next two places as well, with Daniel Mahrer finishing fourth in 2:20.91 and William Besse fifth in 2:20.94.

Two other favorites, Marc Girardelli of Luxembourg and Pirmin Zurbriggen of Switzerland, finished out of the top 10. Tauscher's best previous finish

in a world cup race was fifth in a downhill at Laax, Switzerland, Jan. 6.

Tauscher used the same brand of skis as Switzerland's Maria Walliser, who won the women's downhill Sunday, and said selecting the right ski and Wax formula was vital to his victory.

"My skis were very fast throughout the course," Tauscher said. "I'm very surprised with this victory, because I was thinking at best to finish among the top 15."

Mueller said he was happy with the silver medal. "I do not consider it a defeat," he said. "I skied to the limit. The difference between first and second is often a matter of luck. It was a fantastic course."

Zurbriggen wound up tied for 15th, two seconds off the lead, and Girardelli was 21st, 2.38 seconds behind Tauscher.

Tauscher placed sixth in two other downhills and eighth in another in what has been clearly his best season.

But no one expected his gold-medal breakthrough Monday. He had finished no higher than sixth in any of the four training runs.

The race, originally scheduled for Saturday, was postponed when three feet of snow inundated Beaver Creek. Earlier, high winds interrupted training and contributed to a crash by Zurbriggen, leaving him with a bruised upper back and bruised ribs.

Crews managed to clear the course of most of the fresh snow, but Monday's winning time was about two seconds slower than early training times on a harder, icier surface.

Mahrer, with what was considered a disadvantageous start number (2) because early racers had to plow through more loose

snow, posted a quick time that stood up until Tauscher, with bib no. 9, came down.

Tauscher was a full second behind Mahrer at the second intermediate timing, but had narrowed the gap to just two-hundredths at the fourth intermediate, then made up the difference on the bottom part, which featured numerous bumps and rolls and some tight turns.

Mueller, running 11th, and Zurbriggen, starting 15th, couldn't catch him, although Mueller was slightly faster through the fourth intermediate timing.

Unofficially, Norway's Atle Skarvald placed sixth in 2:10.99, followed by three Austrians — Helmut Hoeflechner in 2:11.24, Peter Wirthsberger in 2:11.52 and Roman Rupp in 2:11.60.

Klaus Gattermann of West Germany was 10th in 2:11.68. Canada's Rob Boyd was 11th in 2:11.89, and 18-year-old Tommy Moe of Palmer, Alaska, took 12th in 2:12.27.

Aouita and O'Sullivan showdown quashed

NEW YORK (AP) — The intriguing possibility of a 1.6 kilometre showdown between Said Aouita and Marcus O'Sullivan was quashed when it was announced that the Moroccan would run 3,000 metres at Friday night's Meadowlands Invitational.

Aouita insisted Monday the decision was made by meet director Ray Lupp. Lupp insisted the decision was Aouita's.

"If he wants to run the mile, I run the mile," Aouita told reporters at a luncheon.

A short time earlier Lupp had said: "He said he felt more comfortable running the 3,000 metres than the mile. His objective is to go home with a world record. He said he would run the

mile if I insisted. But he said he would be better prepared to run the 3,000."

Obviously, Lupp did not insist on Aouita running the mile, and Aouita did not insist on running the shorter distance.

Under the circumstances, it would appear that Aouita was ducking O'Sullivan, who won the Meadowlands mile last year in a blazing 3 minutes, 50.94 seconds, the third-fastest indoor clocking in history.

"It's very stupid to compare me with O'Sullivan," said Aouita, holder of four world outdoor records, including the 1,500 metres — the metric mile. "I don't want anyone to tell me I'm afraid of Aouita."

NBA Roundup

NEW YORK (AP) — The Los Angeles Clippers moved to the brink of tying the NBA's single-season losing streak Monday night, dropping their 19th straight game as Mark Aguirre and Sam Perkins keyed the Dallas Mavericks to a 129-111 victory.

Aguirre scored 16 of his 24 points in third quarter as the Mavericks outscored the Clippers 41-18, going from a 59-54 halftime deficit to a 95-77 lead.

Perkins scored 26 points and Rolando Blackmon, who missed the last four games with a dislocated finger, had 19 for the Mavericks, who snapped a 10-game road losing streak.

In the only other National Basketball Association game Monday night, Phoenix routed Utah 104-87.

The single-season losing streak of 20 games was set by the 1972-73 Philadelphia 76ers. The Clippers can match that mark Wednesday night when they play host to the Houston Rockets.

The Clippers' franchise record losing streak of 19 games was set late in the 1981-82 season when the club was in San Diego.

Charles Smith led the Clippers with 23 points.

Suns 104, Jazz 87

Tom Chambers scored 11 of his 24 points in the fourth period as Phoenix averted a second-half collapse and posted its 28th victory, matching last year's total.

Phoenix led 66-45 with 7:02 left in the third quarter before a 20-6 Utah burst trimmed it to 72-65. The Suns opened the fourth quarter with an 8-0 run, with Chambers hitting four free throws. Chambers added a three-point play, a layup and a jumper before Gilliam's stuff with 3:42 left made it 97-75.

Armon Gilliam had 22 points and 11 rebounds, Kevin Johnson 19 points and 12 assists and Mark West 12 rebounds for Phoenix. Karl Malone led the Jazz with 19 points.

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Scots look to sharp-shooter McInally

LIMASSOL (R) — Scotland may rely on sharp-shooting newcomer Alan McInally to lead them in pursuit of a scoring spree against the part-timers of Cyprus in their world cup qualifying match Wednesday.

Unscathed McInally's lethal touch in front of goal could prove vital if the Scots are to crush the whipping-boys of European group five and displace table-topping Yugoslavia.

Second in the standings with three points from two matches, the Scots need to win by a healthy margin. They trail the Yugoslavs by two points and have a significantly inferior goal difference.

Consequently McInally, the English First Division's leading scorer, seems certain to be awarded his first full cap as the Scots go all out for goals.

"This is an appropriate game to bring in McInally," Scotland manager Andy Roxburgh said when he named the Aston Villa striker in his squad last week.

"We must have someone in attack who is capable in the air and Cyprus appear vulnerable in that department."

McInally's place in the side seems all the more likely with doubts surrounding the fitness of Manchester United striker Brian McClair.

But Roxburgh is stressing the need for care as the Cyprists can pack a surprise. Last October they held troubled France to a 1-1 draw at home and Roxburgh said Tuesday: "We have to treat small countries with respect."

"They don't have the quality players like Italy and Germany and so on but at home they're in a position to create problems for any team," he added.

Cypriot coach Panikos Iakovou's side has been weakened by mid-week up ties. Yet, he insists his team, which has scored just once in three games and conceded eight goals, is capable of pulling off another upset.

"We know the difference be-

tween professionals and amateurs but football is probably the only sport where the weak can beat the strong," said Iakovou, who was passed a Scottish F.A. coaching course.

Limassol's hard, uneven pitch will also assist the hosts but Scottish skipper Roy Aitken said his

side's superior pace could hold the key.

"We must get wired in and show some old Scottish passion in order to get the result we want. Andy Roxburgh has stressed that if we slow the game down it will suit the Cypriots perfectly," he said.

PSV faces uphill battle

EINDHOVEN (R) — Depleted PSV Eindhoven must throw caution to the wind Wednesday in a bid to overturn a 3-0 deficit and snatch the European super cup from underdogs Mechelen.

The injury-hit European champions, surprisingly overwhelmed by the Belgians in last week's first leg, will be without Dutch international goalkeeper Hans Van Breukelen and three other regulars when they host the return leg.

"We will try to forget about what happened in the first leg,"

PSV manager Kees Ploegsma told Reuters. "We played without enough concentration. We will try to remedy that but it will be a difficult match."

The Dutch champions and league leaders will also be without striker Wim Kieft, Ivan Nielsen and newly acquired Czechoslovak Libero Jozef Chovanec. But Danish defender Jan Heintze returns after missing the first leg.

But PSV's chances of overhauling the European Cup Winners' Cup holders are not good.

Cortina, home of the bobsleigh

By Clare Lovell
Reuters

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy — Beefy international bobsleighters are rubbing shoulders with refined society at Italy's most fashionable resort this winter.

For Cortina D'Ampezzo, high in the jagged dolomite mountains just south of the Austrian border, is the home of the world's most challenging sled track as well as the town where moneyed Italians spend their holidays.

The track, first built in 1924, is a 1,288-metre ice-scape of hazardous bends and curves which has claimed several lives over the years.

"It is a drivers' track because of the challenge," British Bob Coach Eddie Bojler said. "But if you make a mistake it's quite likely

your brakeman will end up in hospital," he added.

Most of the sleds currently negotiating its deceptive twists and turns are their complete in the world bobsleigh championships were built in Cortina.

The sport's two constructors, Podar and Siorpas, both based in the town, compete for business but in a friendly fashion, according to tourism director Ianni Milani.

The East Germans and Russians build their own sleds, but nearly everyone else comes here and pays about \$15,000 for a basic two-man vehicle.

Cortina's population of 7,500, which swells to over 40,000 at the height of the season, takes an active interest in the sport, which boasts a few passionate devotees round the world but rarely hits the headlines.

During the two-man races this weekend several elderly men gathered in front of a huge screen in the town square showing the event and discussed the comparative merits of the dominant Swiss and East German teams in broad mountain accents.

But for most of Cortina's visitors the championships are incidental.

They come for the impressive scenery of the Dolomites, laid down over millions of years as coral deposits when the area was still under the sea.

They come to rub shoulders with the rich and famous, to stay in luxury hotels, enjoy good food, and pay extravagant prices in stylish shops. Some also come for the fine ski slopes, where they can snow off the latest fashions in snow-wear.

This year popular shades are

purple, pink and fluorescent green — a trend apparently followed by many of the bobsleigh teams who sport garish multicoloured leggings and dazzling helmets.

Only four slopes, fed by snow-making machines, are currently open here because of a drought that has gripped Italy, threatening agriculture and ruining the winter sports season.

"We have had 60 days continuous sunshine — unfortunately," one hotel manager said.

But Cortina, with its high density of fur coats, expensive jewellery and four-wheel drive runabouts, is suffering less than many Italian resorts which rely on skiing for survival.

"Only about 50 per cent of tourists come here for the winter sports," said Milani, "the rest are here to be seen."

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF
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NEUTRALIZE THE DISTRIBUTION

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ K 9 6 5
♥ A 7 3
♦ A 8 6 3
♣ A 9 5

EAST
♠ Q 10 3
♥ K 6 2
♦ K 9 8 6 3 2
♣ J 10 7 5

SOUTH
♠ A 7 4 2
♥ A 9 5
♦ 4
♣ K Q 9 2

The bidding:
North East South West
Pass Pass 1 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♣
Looking at all four hands, the play at four spades is simple. However, after a heart lead can you guarantee your contract, assuming trumps are no worse than 3-1, if all you could see is your side's assets?
North's jump to three spades showed a hand worth almost an opening bid and four-card support. South had more than enough to continue on to game.
West led the top of his heart sequence and, since there was no point to a holdup play, declarer took the ace. If trumps were 2-2, declarer could claim the contract regardless

of the club situation, so he cashed the king-ace only to learn that he had a loser in that suit. The club suit now became crucial.
Looking at all four hands, it is obvious that declarer can pick up the clubs with two finesses. But that would be a foolish line to adopt since a 3-2 break with split honors is far more likely than than the precise 4-1 distribution that actually existed. But declarer found a way to neutralize any distribution of the club suit.
He cashed the ace of diamonds and ruffed a diamond, then cashed the king of clubs. With his ground-work completed, he exited with a heart. The defenders did as well as they could by taking their two heart tricks, ending in the East hand. East cashed his high trump but, since a red-suit lead would give declarer a ruff-suff, he was forced to exit with a club; he chose the ten.
Declarer let that ride round to dummy's ace. Had West followed, declarer would have cashed the queen and claimed. But when West showed out, the finesse for the jack was marked and the contract was safe. Note that, had declarer not cashed the king of clubs early, he would have been faced with a guess in the club suit. South's line would have proved equally effective had clubs split 5-0, or if West held four clubs. Try it, if you don't believe us.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris

HARRIS 2-7

"If you like to watch TV while you eat, that's fine. Stay tuned for Harriet Parker with the local news."

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FYNAC
TENFO
LENZOZ
ARIDAL

WHAT THAT TIRE SOME SPEECHMAKER COULD NOT BE AFTER HE WAS CALLED ON.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: NOISY REBEL MARAUD SQUALL
Answer: What the bodybuilder turned claim digger seemed to be — MUSSEL — SOUND

THE Daily Crossword

by Bernice Gordon

ACROSS
1. Commemorative
5. Titled ladies
10. Influence
14. Happy hour place
15. Type of type
16. Malaysian boat
17. Some shoe
18. Titties
19. Rangy
20. Glutted
21. Rubbish
22. Protection
24. — retreat (withdraw hurriedly)
25. 14 city
28. In chains
31. Devoured
32. Send (money)
34. Battery part
35. Gane
37. — Clara
38. Kind of ranch
40. Actress Janis
42. Grins
44. Tuck's partner
45. Turned away
47. Skips over
49. Seething
50. Small amount
51. Fragrance
52. — a tea
53. Rabbit relative
57. All-weather wear
59. Particular
60. Climbing vine
61. It wine town
62. Obtains
63. TV's Buddy
64. Puss' grades

DOWN
1. Fundamentals
2. avia
3. Allowance for waste
4. Caught sight
5. Proudlands
6. Bitter drug
7. Weather word
8. St. Lo summer

9. Poem part
10. Football player
11. Kind of skirt
12. Excellent
13. Prattle
14. Like a beaver
15. Per
16. Brilliantly-colored fish
17. Cavity
18. "Thereby" hangs
19. Dinner wear
20. Taped
21. Arcaro
22. Ocean floors
23. Normand of silents
24. Roof parts
25. AEF word
26. Sch. subject
27. Slow mover
28. Whit
29. Medicinal plant

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:
ARIDAL RECTOR RIGOR
HOBOT ARIDAL RECTOR
HARRIS 2-7

50. Actress Irene
51. Location
52. Seven
53. Medicinal amount
5

Opposition leader latest casualty in Japanese scandal

TOKYO (AP) — The head of Japan's opposition Democratic Socialist Party stepped down Tuesday, the latest casualty of a major stock scandal, while other opposition leaders said they would call on the ruling party to purge itself of leaders linked to the scandal.

Saburo Tsukamoto resigned as chairman of the third largest opposition party after party elders demanded he take responsibility for his links to a stock-profiteering scandal that already has led more than 20 resignations, including those of three cabinet ministers and three other opposition members.

The 61-year-old party chief maintained he was innocent of any wrongdoing and was quitting for the sake of the party, which is facing a major upper house election in July.

"If my resignation can bring gains for the party, I decided it is better for me to withdraw now," he said.

Tsukamoto was among influential politicians and business leaders who were offered the opportunity to purchase cheap, unlisted shares in Recruit-Cosmos Co., a real estate subsidiary of the information-based conglomerate Recruit Co.

The shares rocketed in value immediately after they were offered for public trading in

October 1987. Tsukamoto admitted in December that he earned 10 million yen (\$77,520) in the transaction.

Under Japanese securities laws, such transactions were not illegal but they have incited public outrage and raised questions of political ethics and finances.

Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita has vowed to try to restore public trust in politics after the scandal led to the resignations of Kiichi Miyazawa as finance minister and deputy prime minister, Takashi Hasegawa as justice minister and Ken Harada as director general of the Economic Planning Agency.

Takeshita and several other top officials of his Liberal Democratic Party, including Chief Cabinet Secretary Keizo Obuchi and Secretary General Shintaro Abe, also have been linked directly or indirectly to the scandal. But Takeshita has denied any knowledge of Recruit stock trading by his secretary, and has ruled out opposition demands to resign and call an early election.

With the departure of Tsukamoto — the only one of four opposition members linked to the scandal who had refused to step aside — the opposition was expected to join forces to again demand the resignation of Takeshita and his entire cabinet when parliament convenes Friday.

Keigo Ouchi, secretary general of the Democratic Socialists, told reporters Tuesday that Tsukamoto's resignation would have a "major political impact."

"We have made our position clear in our own party... and now we plan to cooperate with other political parties" in clearing up the Recruit scandal, he said.

The Democratic Socialists had formed a tacit alliance last year with Takeshita's party to give a semblance of unity as parliament passed the government's tax bill. The Democratic Socialists were seen then as being tainted along with the ruling party, and unable to take a high moral position.

Takako Doi, chairwoman of the largest opposition Japan Socialist Party, welcomed the resignation, saying it would allow the opposition to join forces to "question the responsibility of Takeshita and other ruling party officials" linked to the Recruit scandal.



Rio carnival hits high point with samba parade

THE RIO DE JANEIRO carnival reached its apex Monday with the city's traditional "Samba School" parade, as thousands of Brazilians in plumes and sequins danced through downtown on the third day of the annual pre-Lenten revelry.

Across the country, millions shed their worries and inhibitions and take part in the four-day festival of drinking, dancing and sexual abandon that ends on Ash Wednesday.

Optimism in Warsaw parley

WARSAW (AP) — Government and opposition leaders involved in unprecedented talks on Poland's future have voiced optimism on prospects for change, but Solidarity leader Lech Walesa conceded that much distrust remains.

Fifty-seven delegates representing the opposition, the Communist Party and its allies, the government and the Roman Catholic Church met for about three hours Monday and agreed to break up into three working groups beginning Wednesday.

One group will discuss economic and social policy, one group trade unions and the other group political reforms, said a joint statement issued after the opening session in the ornate council of ministers palace in central Warsaw.

Opposition spokesmen have said they expected the real work of the negotiations to take place in these groups, and the complicated negotiations could last six weeks.

The chief official at the negotiations, labelled "roundtable," talks, was poliburo member and Interior Minister Czeslaw Kiszczak. Meanwhile, Walesa led a 25-member group representing Solidarity and other branches of Poland's opposition movement.

Kiszczak told the gathering that introducing trade union freedoms was a question of how it should be done, not if it should be done. But he said it would begin only if the talks produced a broader agreement on political and economic reform.

"If we work out at the round table and officially announce to society a confirmed consensus on the idea of non-confrontational elections as well as support for planned political and economic reforms, there will be an immediate possibility" to lift the ban on more than one trade union at a given factory, Kiszczak said.

Walesa, meanwhile, seemed to be holding out for quick legislation.

"We demand solidarity. We have the right to it," Walesa said in a speech immediately following Kiszczak's.

Authorities had agreed in advance that the talks could result in reinstating Solidarity, the first independent labour organisation in the East Bloc. It was suppressed in a 1981 martial-law crackdown.

In exchange, authorities seek an endorsement from the opposition for economic reforms that could increase prices of subsidised goods and cause unemployment if outdated plants are closed.

Column

Todd Bridges faces murder attempt charge

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Television actor Todd Bridges has been ordered held without bail on an attempted murder charge after a judge declared him a danger to the community. Bridges, 23, charged Monday with shooting a man five times and trying to slash his throat, was silent except to acknowledge his name and that he was pleading innocent to the charges. The court said an affidavit filed by police indicated that Bridges was heavily involved in cocaine use. "According to witnesses, he sells sometimes to support his habit since he has spent much of his TV show earnings," the judge said, reading from the affidavit. Bridges played in the TV series "Diff'rent Strokes" between 1978-86. Giving an account of the alleged crime, the affidavit said Bridges allegedly said Kenneth Clay, 25, last Thursday while he was standing, then emptied a gun into him as he lay on the floor at a house in south-central Los Angeles known as a drug hangout. The judge said Bridges then left and got a knife, came back and allegedly tried to slash Clay's throat, cutting his jaw, according to the affidavit. Attorney Johnnie Cochran, representing Bridges, told the judge: "I think much of what the court heard is hearsay and may not be true. But I can't disprove it at this time." Milton noted that Bridges has a prior conviction involving a fake bomb report for which he was placed on probation in 1987.

Bomb threat scares the media

SYDNEY (AP) — One of Australia's largest news media buildings was evacuated Tuesday following a bomb scare from an anonymous caller claiming to be a Libyan sympathiser. The 2GB building, owned by John Fairfax and Sons which publishes the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper and housing the commercial 2GB radio station, was shut down for three hours while police investigated the bomb threat. The building also has offices for the domestic Australian Associated Press, the Associated Press, Agence France-Presse, New Zealand Press Association and the Kyodo News Agency of Japan as well as the Asian Wall Street Journal. The caller, speaking with an Irish accent, claimed to represent a group called the Libyan Peoples Front. The first call was made to AFP, the French news agency, saying a bomb had been planted on the 4th floor of the building which houses correspondents from the international media. Two other calls were made to commercial radio station 2GB. No motive was given for the bomb hoax. Police searched the eight-storey building and later declared it safe to return.

Turning from music to recipes

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — Country music singer Randy Travis, a former short-order cook, is putting out a book containing his favourite recipes, his spokeswoman says. "He does cook a lot and there are certain things he does well," publicist Evelyn Shriver said. "He likes to barbecue a lot and he likes to make spaghetti." Travis was cooking at a Nashville nightclub more than three years ago when he was discovered and signed a recording contract. Since then, he has sold 6 million records, including "Forever and ever, amen" and his current "deeper than the holler." The recipes are being compiled, but no release date for the cookbook has been set, Ms. Shriver said.

Superstar Soprano to sing for charity

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, England (AP) — Superstar Soprano Dame Joan Sutherland has agreed to sing at a charity concert this fall, organisers say. The Oct. 11 concert hopes to raise at least \$87,000 for the Prince's Trust, which helps needy young people, said Eric Jubb and Ged Graham, who work for the Tyneside council. Both men are devoted fans of the 62-year-old Australian Diva, whose husband, conductor Richard Bonynge, will serve as accompanist for the concert. "We struck up a friendship with Dame Joan after she agreed to meet us after a performance at Covent Garden 10 years ago and we have been to see her every time she has been in Britain since," Jubb said last week. "The last time we asked her if she would like to sing at Newcastle, and we were absolutely bowled over when she said she would and told us to talk with her manager and agent."



Kitty Dukakis

Kitty Dukakis on the wagon

BOSTON (R) — The wife of defeated Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis has entered a hospital for a 30-day alcohol abuse treatment programme.

Massachusetts Governor Dukakis announced Monday his wife, Kitty, 52, had developed an alcohol problem soon after he lost the presidential poll in November. During the campaign she disclosed her 1982 treatment for a 26-year addiction to diet pills, and said she had not used them since.

Dukakis in a statement announced that she voluntarily had entered a Rhode Island hospital Sunday and in a later news conference praised her "very courageous" decision.

He told reporters his wife had not had trouble with alcohol before or during his presidential campaign but that a problem arose a few weeks after he lost to Republican George Bush.

"Kitty has a way of rising to challenges. She is best in times of crisis. That was certainly true during the campaign... I thought she was magnificent," he said.

After the campaign, "there were limited number of episodes, two or three, where she was clearly drinking excessively," Dukakis said, adding that people with one substance abuse problem may later have trouble with alcohol.

"It doesn't matter if it's in a bottle or it's solid, if you're chemically dependent you're chemically dependent."

Borg — icy on court but not in private life

MILAN (R) — Sweden's Bjorn Borg, who was briefly admitted to hospital Tuesday suffering from an overdose of barbiturates, became the outstanding tennis player of his era by displaying nerves of steel.

But in contrast to his icy style on the court, his personal life was marked by a succession of love affairs that provided continuous material for Sweden's popular press.

Last year he split up with Jannike Bjorling, his companion since 1985, and took up with sultry, 39-year-old Italian pop singer Loredana Berté.

She raised the alarm Tuesday and accompanied him to hospital. A police spokesman said he was in no danger and would not comment on a report by the Italian news agency ANSA that Borg had apparently tried to commit suicide.

Borg and Berté were living together in Milan and announced last month that they planned to marry. But the Roman Catholic Church said it had turned down Borg's request for a church wedding in Milan this month because both had been married before.

Borg is best remembered for his five successive Wimbledon wins, an achievement unmatched by any other player before or since. But he abruptly retired at the age of 27 after losing his Wimbledon title to American John McEnroe.

Emerging on the sporting scene in the early seventies, his shaggy long blond hair held back by a head-band, Borg inspired a new generation of tennis players.

Disavowing public showmanship and temperamental outbursts, he won his first big

title at the age of 17. In 1975 he carried Sweden to its first Davis Cup victory and the following year he swept to his first Wimbledon win.

The son of a shirtmaker, Borg was born in the working-class south side of Stockholm June 6 — Sweden's national day — in 1956. He grew up in the nearby industrial town of Sodertalje.

His skills on the court came to light when his father gave his eight-year-old son a tennis racket he had won in a local table tennis tournament. At 14 he dropped out of school to concentrate on the game that was to earn him an estimated \$100 million. His rise was meteoric.

He overwhelmed Romania's Ilie Nastase for his first Wimbledon title, outlasted his arch-rival Jimmy Connors in the

1977 and 1978 finals and beat two more American left-handers, Roscoe Tanner and John McEnroe, in 1979 and 1980. Borg also won the French championship and failed only to lift the U.S. Open crown despite reaching the final four times.

"While some fellow competitors reacted to disputed calls by smashing rackets, hurling abuse or sending the ball hurtling into the crowd, an occasional raised eyebrow was Borg's only sign of emotion. He earned the nickname "Ice Borg."

In 1980, he went into tax exile in Monaco and married Romanian tennis player Mariana Simionescu. Four years later they divorced and in 1985 he returned to Sweden to live with Bjorling, then a 17-year-old model. They have a son, Robin.

Swedes who had once criticised Borg for leaving had given him a warm welcome when he returned. The media in Sweden informed a fascinated public about his every move.

He increased his wealth by developing a line of men's clothing and investing in real estate in central Stockholm. He was often spotted at the city's favourite watering holes.

Leif Schulman, assistant editor of entertainment magazine Hant I Veckan (It Happened This Week), said part of the fascination with Borg was that readers liked to see how money did not always buy happiness.

"People like the idea that all his millions have not given him stability in his private life," Schulman said after his relationship with Bjorling broke up.

Bhutto plays down Indo-Pak tension

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said Monday she was confident that efforts to reduce tension with India would survive a row over Pakistan's development of long-range missiles.

In an interview with Reuters, Bhutto dismissed the exchanges on the missile issue as a hiccup in the normalisation process between Islamabad and New Delhi.

Pakistan confirmed Sunday it had test-fired its first long-range rocket but denied charges by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi that it had developed the missiles to carry nuclear weapons.

Gandhi warned Pakistan Friday that India would take steps to protect itself if reports of a missile test were true.

Bhutto said: "I think the basic motivating force for improving relations and reducing tensions is there on both sides of the border."

"I expect these hiccups will continue for a while but would not necessarily interrupt the momentum towards defusing tensions."

Bhutto and Gandhi met during a South Asian summit meeting in Islamabad last December, raising hopes of improved ties between the two neighbours that have fought three wars since independence in 1947.

But political analysts say the threat of a new arms race could revive the old tensions.

Bhutto recalled the history of recent tension between Pakistan and India, culminating in the 1987 massing of troops along the joint border.

"It is very difficult to start a new process, and the process of reducing (India-Pakistan) tension comes after a long period of heightened tension which nearly led to a conflict in 1987," Bhutto said.

"But the important point that I want to emphasise is that a good start was made," she said about meetings with Gandhi, which produced agreements not to attack each other's nuclear sites.

The move was opposed by Bhutto's right-wing critics, who want Islamabad to resist what they see as an Indian bid to dominate smaller neighbours.



Benazir Bhutto

Analysts and diplomats in New Delhi said Gandhi might adopt a vote-grabbing, bellicose stand ahead of elections he must call by the end of the year and return to the hardline posture of his late mother, Indira Gandhi.

But Bhutto said: "These kinds of hiccups are expected and will perhaps have some effect on the process of normalisation, but not reverse it."

Each side accuses the other of planning to acquire nuclear weapons and says its own nuclear programme is peaceful.

Pretoria unveils Mozambique plan

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa has proposed to the United States that a peace process similar to that which reached a settlement on Angola and Namibia be set in motion for Mozambique.

Foreign Minister Pik Botha said Tuesday.

Briefing foreign correspondents, Botha said he made the suggestion last December to then U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz.

Botha was in the United States in December for signing ceremonies under which an estimated 50,000 Cuban troops are being withdrawn from Angola in exchange for South Africa granting independence to the former German colony of Namibia.

The foreign minister said Tuesday he had not yet had any feedback from the new Bush administration about his idea.

He said the proposal was to repeat in Mozambique the unexpected success achieved last year by the U.S.-brokered negotiations on the western side of southern Africa.

"The idea is that if we could have done it in a very difficult area in the west, why can't we do it in the east?"

He said acceptance of the idea

would depend on the agreement of the Mozambican government, but he believed Maputo would be amenable to the idea.

The Mozambican government is fighting a desperate civil war against right-wing rebels of the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR).

Mozambique accuses South Africa of backing the MNR, a charge Pretoria denies.

An issue of major concern to both countries is the plan to reactivate Africa's biggest hydroelectric project at Cahora Bassa in Mozambique.

Benigno said Mateo Caparas, chairman of the presidential Commission on Good Government, had flown to New York to verify reports that Marcos was willing to plea bargain with U.S. authorities on those charges.

A former cabinet minister has meanwhile said he collected more than \$4.5 million in kickbacks from Japanese companies for allegedly embezzling more than \$100 million from the Philippines and stashing much of it in the United States.

Manila denies negotiations with Marcos

MANILA (AP) — President Corazon Aquino's spokesman denied Tuesday that the government had agreed to negotiate with ousted leader Ferdinand Marcos on his plea for permission to return from exile.

Presidential spokesman Teodoro Benigno said a government official had been dispatched to the United States to talk with Marcos' attorneys in an attempt to verify reports that he was willing to plea bargain on U.S. criminal charges.

But Benigno denied Vice-Pres-

ident Salvador Laurel's claim that the government had agreed to negotiate with Marcos' family about the ailing former president's plea to be allowed to return from exile in Hawaii before he dies.

Asked if Aquino had approved negotiations with Marcos, Benigno replied, "No, no, of course not."

Manila and his wife, Imelda, face U.S. criminal charges for allegedly embezzling more than \$100 million from the Philippines and stashing much of it in the United States.

Paraguay opposition uneasy

ASUNCION, Paraguay (AP) — Opposition politicians who have for years pushed for free and fair elections say coup leader Andres Rodriguez' setting of elections for May 1 will not give them time to organise campaigns.

Some say they believe Rodriguez set the early date precisely because the opposition cannot possibly be ready by then to mount a serious challenge to the long-entrenched ruling party.

Rodriguez, who ousted dictator Alfredo Stroessner in a bloody coup last week, dissolved parliament Monday and set the May 1 date for presidential and congressional elections.

He said only the Communist Party would be banned from fielding candidates.

At the first presidential news conference Paraguayans can remember, the 65-year-old Rodriguez denied rumours of his involvement with the drug trade,

saying they "were spread by people trying to defame me."

He said Paraguay, reputedly a major transit point for cocaine, would crack down on narcotics trafficking and cooperate in international anti-drug campaigns, including those of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

Rodriguez also denied reports that as many as 300 people died by the coup. He said the dead and wounded together did not exceed 50.

Upon taking power Friday, Rodriguez promptly promised democratic reforms. But the opposition expressed scepticism about his hasty calling of elections.

"I personally can't even be a candidate for anything because I'm not registered" to vote, said Domingo Laino, a former political exile and leader of what is thought to be Paraguay's biggest opposition group, the Authentic

Radical Liberal Party. "Our people are not registered" either, he said.

Laino suggested the May 1 election date "could be interpreted as a trap" set by the ruling Colorado Party, which after 41 consecutive years in power is rich and well-organised.

Stroessner, now in exile in Brazil, ruled Paraguay for nearly 35 years after seizing power in a 1954 coup and was the Colorado Party's candidate every five years in elections widely believed to be fraudulent.

A Brazilian Foreign Ministry official said Monday Stroessner was free to go where he wants in Brazil under the terms of his exile.

The official in Brasilia said Stroessner was in no way confined to the guest house of the state hydro-electric company in central Brazil where he is now staying.



Paraguayans celebrate the coup that toppled Alfredo Stroessner